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POETRY

THE SEA

*By T. P. Flanagan*

I

The sea takes down and casts up

My love went from me and danced  
beside the white falling flowers of the  
sea.

A bell was ringing in a fishing town  
Black and white County Down fishing  
town.

People were bathing,  
their bodies, formalized by water  
and sunlight, set on the  
waves, as on pedestals.

II

In Lissadell, bones lie along the  
upper edges of the shore, the thin  
delicate wing bones of birds,  
Here the dust fragile anatomy of a sea louse,  
or there the sun scorched, water shaved  
scaffolding of dead laburnum,  
and sea-sucked poppy cups.

Sometimes too a bird herself, the  
 delicate pitiable head cleaned by  
 the sand grit and the sea wind  
 for the collectors cabinet.  
 Aideen's grand-mother (or maybe her  
 grand aunt) collected the polished  
 heads of the dead sea birds.

Did she walk the Edwardian shore  
 where nothing ever marred the  
 beauty, but the inquisitive birds  
 and the whirling seed pods,  
 and gather them in her handbag,  
 or did a foot-man walk behind  
 her, holding a parasol and  
 the bag.

They are in slotted rose-wood  
 cabinets in the gallery now,  
 where boy scouts or Sunday  
 troopers admire them.

And the wind sings in the hollow  
 creamy domes, the sea wind  
 restless where the dazed astonished  
 brains of the birds were, sings,  
 sings, a high clear cry.

### III

My fingers are bleeding I went  
 down into the green deeps of  
 the sea, looking for you. And  
 I found coral, beauty made out  
 of death. My fingers trailed  
 thin red banners in the  
 muted under depths.

I bent down and wrote in  
the sand, the dove sand,  
the sand of evening. I  
wrote a question. The  
water came up in foam  
and posted  
my question in the tide

I am waiting for an answer.

We must keep arguing and  
living, suffering and loving,  
loving and dying, always dying  
going out like a lighted  
stick thrown into water.

A man lives and dies every time  
he loves. When its over he  
covets the broken image.

The little corpses of my loves  
run to me. Seeds down the  
wind. We join hands and  
dance in twilight by the  
sea, and the appropriate  
waves rear and prance,  
dead sycamores shiver and  
giggle, and the bones are smashed.

I live my loves over again  
beside the sea  
I destroyed them that I might  
possess them.

Is there always an afterwards, a  
vampire glut of memory strained  
through pain.

## IV

It 's not too late. Not yet,  
The sea waits a million years  
strains and dashes and retires  
Craves a cliff or a shore, snatches  
at it, slides over it, licks it, bites it  
polishes it into pebbles. Till now day  
after day, the pebbles slip  
between her long, covetous  
fingers.

I run too near a thing.  
In the struggle  
for individuality  
there is no time  
to create or analyse a  
scream of frustration edged  
with beauty because of the  
reason. We never  
remember or record it  
afterwards.

## V

The dead Swiss waiter from  
Rosses Point was laid on  
a plank. The salt water  
ran out of his clothes  
They put straw over his face.

The jealous cat-mewing  
cat cruel gulls, carved  
away his eyes

O Lazarus come forth



For one second, between amazement,  
and death  
a moment of exquisite pain  
blueness, greeness—what ? What  
world for the poor Swiss  
waiter struggling to keep familiarity ?

Sea birds, give back his eyes,  
Hands that called up Lazarus  
loosen his tongue.

Memories drift out of the  
smoke of the spume. The  
day, the sea  
took the " Princess Victoria "   
in her groin. Coming out  
into the twilight we saw  
the queues and the special  
editions. The sea-rape,  
the numbered loves.

At Donaghadee, opposite the  
spot, a year afterwards  
this one remembers her youth  
the purity of something gone, the  
sweetness that inevitable habit  
destroyed.

And yet, at times so young  
so guileless, running smiling  
through April for me.

## VI

All one night I couldn't sleep  
because the sea was mad  
like some enormous incredible  
beast in heat. Destroying  
the edges of the world, sucking

down ships, glutted with  
 life even with stinging, amazing  
 archery breaking the wings  
 of the gannets.

Yet, next morning, nothing  
 but sunlight, wet sand  
 for the dog to run on  
 a crab and a plume of  
 sea-weed in a pool,  
 and a thin silver band rumbling  
 far out.

Is there anything constant, anything  
 sure. We plot the sea,  
 compass it, keeping our eye  
 on the moon, know some  
 notion of its moves. But for human  
 beings we have no compasses,  
 no engraved charts ; for  
 peace, for turbulence : no  
 ultimate reason.

Only this, love runs through  
 all our actions, the sure  
 current, shaping the  
 pull of the sea.

This pale boy, the waves have  
 given us ; lovely and smooth  
 with no scar on him, no  
 sign of violence between his  
 parted lips, like a  
 white statue dug out of  
 brown Etruscan earth  
 and laid reverently  
 in the sun, did he  
 plunge in and love the  
 feel of it round him, the

amorous play of the  
 water on his limbs, did  
 it drive him crazy with  
 its smooth clinging ecstasy?  
 So that he swam on and on,  
 heedless of time and physical  
 effort, careless of the  
 sudden excited quivering in  
 the water, till  
 like one, in a sleep of strange  
 white and green flowers, the  
 sea slid over him and took  
 him.

## NEW FOLKLORE FROM SLIEVE AUGHTY

*By* HUGH CONNELL

Surveying the wilderness from this rugged eave,  
 Where sedge and clay are rinsed in a quivering air  
 That is urgent to renege to water or fire  
 Through crystal and rose, through greens that are strict and rare,  
 I searched for substance, grasped at a leaning tower,  
 Was strayed by thorn and thin lake and thirsty fissure.

Turning, I found her, the golden wandering one,  
 Mother of heifers, kinder, more silken than they;  
 Happily pent to browse between cliff and stone  
 On pasture the whole round world might envy—  
 But under those gold-silk lashes the eye, I vow,  
 The kindly quizzical eye was of no right cow.

Around me the hills are waves that the sky would lose  
 But for the black cliff-notches that keep their hold ;  
 I overlook half a princedom through rain and sun  
 To dim white cliffs where the Spanish cow grew old,  
 And died—But she never died. One hungry year  
 She crossed dry rivers and ribs, found Beulah here.

The tale told to O'Curry about 1840 is the oldest version Westropp could find of "The Corofin Cow Legend", much the same as an Argyllshire version. Lon, the first smith in Ireland and a De Danaan, brought Glasgeivnagh (stolen and smuggled !) back from a visit to Spain. Fugitive from the Milesians, he had a long search for a "desert and fertile place" and found it at last on the scarp of Burren. Her supply of milk was inexhaustible, and wherever she lay down a spring gushed out ; though the place of her lying remained always barren rock the spring was the best of gifts in such a dry country.

This version ends with the statement "An Ulsterman stole her". A later and more popular story is, that after doing yeoman service during the Famine, she was milked into a sieve by a witch and died of a broken heart because she could not fill it. I suggest that she just "retired" from well-doing by crossing the crags, bogs and dry river-beds of the limestone Fergus Basin and establishing herself in one of the fertile niches in the sandstone uplands that make its eastern margin, where there is nothing supernatural about the water-supply.

A frothing fountain pouring down the face of a rain-drenched limestone cliff does look exactly like spilt milk. It may only run like this for a few hours.



# MY SPANISH NOTEBOOK

## SELECTIONS FROM WORK IN PROGRESS

*By Arland Ussher*

**B**LAKE said, "He who the ox to wrath has moved will never be by woman loved"; which only shows that he can have known little of women—especially of Spanish women. To see the ox, or rather the bull, "moved to wrath" is their particular delight; and while I have met many non-Spanish men who disliked the bull-fight, I have scarcely ever encountered the woman who was repelled by it.

On Sunday I went with Gayner and Pam to "the bulls", in a mood of "See Everything Once"; but indeed I could bear to see this curious spectacle many times. I admit to having been captivated by the ancient art of tauromachy—though not quite in the manner of M. de Montherlant. There is something really exhilarating, tonic and cleansing about this fight between man and beast—at least for a person who does not let his sensitivity be blunted by it, as perhaps the Spaniards tend to do. I am naturally squeamish to excess in regard to the callous treatment of animals—if my car drives over a dog I can drive no more that day; and I do not offer this difference in my reactions as necessarily a defence of the bull-fight. If I could have been present at an auto-da-fe (and I cannot be sure I would not have taken a ticket), I should probably have been less horrified by it than by a street-accident. The strangeness, the colour and formality would have subdued my humane reactions; and I am sure much modern humanitarianism owes its strength to the lack of ritual (or real gorgeous ritual) in modern life. The Bayreuth festivals, which provided the Germans with a modern cultus, have just a little of the responsibility for the Nuremberg laws.

Bull-fighting needs no detailed description by me; its "splendours" have been amply portrayed in recent years, by a series of brilliant apologists—with perhaps an under-emphasis of its "miseries". The bull-fight belongs of course to the same class of inventions as the duel, the Samurai's code of honour, and religion based on hell-fire; in other words, it is barbaric.

It is also, in *some* of its moments, extraordinarily beautiful. So for that matter, I should not be surprised, were the sacrifices at Tinochtlan (though unlike those officiating in the latter, its priests are often victims). There is scarcely a note in the whole range of emotions which it does not stir; Hemingway has even seen comedy in the First Act—a paradox deeper, it may be, than he knew, and of which I shall have later to speak. The final duel between the matador and the enraged animal has *at the best* a living and sculpturesque tension which almost deserves Gautier's excitement ("greater than all Shakespeare's plays"). Compared with English stag-hunting and pheasant-shooting (though these are not amusements of the average Englishman), bull-fighting can be called fair-play; compared with our popular equivalent, the horse-race, it is little tainted by commercialism. The bull, it is said (and this is really stupid), has "no chance"; yet the animal is bred in any case for slaughter, and its antagonist "takes a chance" unknown to any other sportsman. The inevitability of the beast-sacrifice is an artistic one—the inevitability of the ground-theme. Though rooted in obscure and savage instincts, it is not capricious or arbitrary—a matter of turning down the thumbs. In the bull-fight, as nowhere else in the world today, can be seen the antique grace of the swordsman—a deft and gallant game with death. This must be allowed—indeed stressed; and yet . . .

Perhaps I can do no better than beg the reader's patience while I try to disentangle my own feelings; and I must begin with a slight preamble—like the tauromachean *paseo de las cuadrillas*!

. . . . .

The North European has learnt that an animal has a "soul"—that is to say, it has a being in its own right. Because animals can suffer, they have a right to a certain consideration—like children, lunatics and other non-rational agents. Pity is the purest of virtues, and pity for the creatures can be the purest, most delicate form of pity—precisely because it is not based on reciprocity, and because the brute has not *chosen* its suffering. But (this is the catch, and it is a ticklish one!) in loving the brute we must love it, partly, for its very brutality; otherwise our love



is mere sentimentalism. We must love our dog because it chases (or wants to chase) cats, our cat for its stealthy tread in tracking a thrush, the thrush for its competent demolition of a snail, the snail—if we are St. Francis—for its oozy progress in doing whatever snails do. And similarly we must love our fellow-man (among other reasons) because he is a hunter and fighter—as we should love the herd-leader for its dreadful horns. Any love which is less than this is eunuch-love, and unhealthy. Being founded in unreality, it produces greater evils than (as it flatters itself) it suppresses.

The Southerner, generally speaking, is less pitiful, and he does not recognise that the animal has a "soul". At a bull-fight, he does not feel the hornet-sting of the banderillas on his own flesh—he likes (even more, *she* likes) the sight of the blood. He has no sense of pathos when the bull, released from his pen, runs blithely into the freedom of the arena—only to find himself "with a wild surmise" hemmed in by that ring-upon-ring of faces—a lonely brute, for all his unwieldy size. He becomes in short, as we say, for the moment himself a brute. But not only in an ignoble sense! The Spaniard is not just a brute, but a better thing—a brute-fancier. "The brute" is not, as Protestant Christianity has taught us, a thing to be extirpated from our nature, it is the only foundation for the human virtues—the very fire of life. For the Spaniard, as for every true sportsman, the beast is not merely a victim but also a *totem*. It is the strength and prowess, the valour and cunning of the animal which, in matching his own against it, he wishes to assimilate into himself. There is something noble in the applause amidst which the carcass of a gallant bull is dragged out of the arena by the jingling team. The *aficionado* loves in every bull *the Bull*—the Platonic Idea—as Don Juan seeks "the Sex" in all his women; the bull to him is not indeed a *person*, but a heraldic image of virile force. Let me repeat: without this *participation mystique*, this knowledge which is also self-knowledge, there is no health in our humanitarianism.

The animal, for the Spaniard, is a mere force of nature (which of course is largely what it is); and in combating it he finds release for the same force, which (as he knows) inhabits his breast. He obtains the Aristotelian *katharsis*—what is rather unpleasantly translated as a "purgation". It may be said that he also deadens his sensibilities, for the play is not a mere mimicry; but at least

he does not deceive himself deeply about his true nature. The Spaniard knows himself a killer, and hence the deep sadness, the nearness of death, with which Spanish nature is permeated : but a sadness which is rooted in truth. There is nothing so morally repellent as the man who goes through life (as so many do) imagining himself to be a perfectly reasonable, harmless, kindly creature. The beef-fed modern city-dweller should be forced to visit the slaughter-houses ; or rather—as that experience may be too ugly to be beneficial—let him go to the bull-fight.

He will probably find himself, as I found myself, a good deal excited ; and that is good, for it will make him think. “ When the man is fighting mad ”, as Yeats said, “ he completes his partial mind ”. And in fact there are many other aspects of bull-fighting beside the pathetic. However it may be for a Hindu, it is hard for us to feel pity for a bull without seeing him wrongly—as a mere gentle cow, or rather as a human person. We “ put ourselves in the place ” of the animal, as we have been taught to do ; and in so doing we abolish the animal. The unhappy townsman scarcely knows the horned monster (and the Spanish *toro de lidia* is a half-descendant of the wild aurochs) ; for a child bred in the country it is the earliest form he experiences of Primeval Terror, the last dread survivor of the untamed past. He does not enter a field without looking sharply to see if there is a bull in it ; and his companions will dare him to dare and rouse the creature. Here is the bull-fight in germ—the attempt to sail near the wind of Primeval Terror. A boy who has such memories will never be a mere robot-citizen, or lose the man in the civil servant.

In future, I suppose, the Sign of the Bull will be taken out of the sky ; the countryside will lose its Daemon. Even if our race does not go vegetarian (which is perhaps unlikely), bulls will be kept carefully isolated in the annexes of state-laboratories, for artificial insemination purposes—if a real bull is still required for that ! They will be as unseen by human, or other bovine, eyes as the Minotaur in the Cretan labyrinth, or as the giant minds who tabulate the records. I am not a despiser of the conception of the Welfare State, and I am not wholly opposed to such schemes—if they are found to work as well in fact as on paper, which I somewhat doubt. Humanity may invent better forms of the open-air ballet and mystery-play than the irritating of animals—which is a little too near the teasing of half-wits to be



altogether adult or noble. (And many Spanish men seem indeed almost half-witted in their bovinity! We become like what we contemplate, and this sort of totemism has its danger: the Spaniard is the real "John Bull"—or should I say perhaps Juan Toro—as the traditional Englishman is rather John Bulldog!) But let it be clear—there is seldom if ever a gain without a proportionate loss; of "progress" there is little enough question. There is not even an indisputable gain in the present "humanisation" of bull-fighting.

The treatment of the horses is an undelightful business, and humane regulations are of little use where public opinion is lacking. Coming so soon after the commencement, it is apt to put a "damper" on the visitor who had expected heroic feats (there are plenty of them to come)—or to send him, as it sent D. H. Lawrence, stumping angrily out. If the Spaniards showed the least sensitivity in this matter, the picadores would be proud of their mounts and of their skill in guarding them from injury—difficult though such skill (consistently with the picador's task) would doubtless be. The mob (and with that word we touch the flaw in bull-fighting) would boo with anger, and not as at present yell with pleasure, when the horse was tossed. M. de Montherlant is grossly wrong in suggesting that we sympathise with the horse only for its size! The horse, as anyone but a French literary man would know, is the most high-strung, the most finely-tempered, of creatures. In the days of the courtly bull-fight the steed was a valuable animal, far removed from the ghastly exhibits which the picador today buys for a song from the contractor. The protective devices now worn by the horses are, I suppose, an improvement on routine-disembowelling; though this is a much-debated question. In the opinion of most enthusiasts for the *corrida*, the sufferings of the horses are by no means lessened by these means, if they are not actually increased—for the horse lives (God help us!) to be tossed another, and perhaps many another, day. Here, I feel, the aesthetic wish is parent to the humanitarian thought—for the *peto* takes away half the glamour of the bull-ring, as well as the tension of the pikeman's act. Aesthetic questions, as I have said, are not ethical ones; and beauty, as Aristotle saw, is near to terror. If I were to be charged by a bull, I should certainly prefer to have the ugliest of cushions between myself and the animal—however great the unavoidable shock and concussion—than to have my

bowels ripped out, and rammed home again by the callous hands of the *chulos*. And it is hard to believe that a horse which had survived one such upset would be the least serviceable, or whether it would be possible to bring it back for any large number of repetitions.

The picador on his nag is a pathetic relic of the knightly bull-fight; he reminds one irresistibly of Quixote on Rosinante—himself the sad descendant of the Cid on Babieca. For indeed the Spaniards—riding-masters to Europe—once loved horses, and many do so still, as is clear to those who have seen the country gentlemen, erect and stately on their steeds, riding to the *corrida*. It is the Crowd which sees something effeminate in “circus-tricks”, and likes to contemplate the mauling of horse and rider; their ecstasy is a subtle revenge on the señores. And here, it may be, this deplorable “First Act” of the *corrida* wins a sort of aesthetic justification—though scarcely a moral one, and not a justification (probably) of which any Spaniard is aware. The mocking and buffeting of “the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance” is rich with religious overtones; and the picador and his maltreated horse are—as Hemingway showed—a “comic relief” for the groundlings. I would say that if that was *all* they were, the act would be as inartistic as it is morally objectionable; for comic relief (as Hemingway is surely well aware) is bad art. We must not be plunged too quickly from the sublime into the ridiculous—much less from the admirable into the disgusting. But the picador also strikes a tragic chord. The man savaged by the Beast (and by the Beast-Mob) at one end of the play, the Beast slain by the Man at the other—in both these events the genres of comedy and tragedy intertwine, though with a differing emphasis; how inextricably may be recognised in the use of the term, the “*veronica*”. When a matador, greatly daring, kneels to kiss the muzzle of the fated victim, the Northerner scarcely knows whether to be thrilled or shocked; like a Protestant at the Roman sacrament, he cannot help passing the molten emotion through the sieve of a cold analysis. For who is the matador but Don Juan, the proud and conquering Spaniard (as Quixote is his pathetic and crack-pated counterpart)—the ice-cool gambler, the steely-purposed and cunning rogue? For the beauty of the kill is indeed an erotic climax—calculated to flutter the most armour-plated of British matrons.

The bull-fight would not be the wonderful thing it is if it did not combine these two polarities: the late-Christian epic of the Wandering Knight, the late-Pagan epic of the Slain Beast (for everything in Spain seems late, from the baroque churches to the times of meals!) In the *corrida* we box the European compass (so to say) widdershins, and see the conscious opening backward into the subconscious. As in a saturnalia, the accustomed roles are here inverted; the *Grand Seigneur* is hidden under the Court Fool, the varletty act as sacrificing Priest. The slain beast is the Slain God—but a pagan god, Apis or Dionysus, the totem of the tribe, whose spilt blood is one with the strong dark blood of Spanish veins. The unhorsed circus-knight is the afflicted God-Man, now no more than a suffering cry on the winds and in the caves—Him Whom Spain with her witless consciousness still worships, but Whom, in such pitiful unconscious travesties, she still mocks.

### THE ALHAMBRA

AS I stand in the Alhambra (I sadly reflect), I would give much to have beside me a cultured Moslem, in place of this gabbling Grenadine. Such a man would lead my distracted attention to the real points of interest—ingenious innovations subtleties of line, problems resolved; he would place these creations in their true stylistic contexts. I am not helped by being told the Alhambra is “the dream of a Sultana called into life by the wand of a magician”. This description suggests “Turkish Delight”—whereas the inventions here, though rich, are exquisitely controlled, and too low in relief to be really excessive or indigestible. There is lavish surface-decoration, of plaster and cedarwood inlay; and, if one is so morose as not to like it, one can disregard it, and enjoy instead the mathematics of the space-relations. But there is, strictly speaking, no *ornament*, as in a Baroque building—and no opulence, scarcely even any marble; it is a lovely toy, almost self-complete. I say *lovely*, subject to correction by my cultured Moslem, who would be at home in this

idiom ; but I will not allow any fellow-European (not even Roger Fry, who loathed it) to contradict me. I find it much lovelier, at any rate, than the Mudéjar work in the Alcázar at Seville (executed, ironically enough, to please the Christian conquerors). However, all this is, to be sure, none of my tradition ; and my eye rested gladly enough on a Renaissance chimney-piece, stuck villainously in the Sala de los Ajimeces. I could wish indeed that the Government would engage a few Moslem savants, to live in these " Promised Lands " (as Moslems call them) and instruct us about their historic buildings : objects which no Christian, not even an Andalusian, can see in their true cultural perspective. Were I appointed to conduct a party of Mahometans around our cathedrals, they would doubtless be equally delighted—or revolted—by all they saw ; they would perceive little difference, probably, between Early English, Perpendicular, and simple Gothic Revival. Which is the nearer equivalent to the Alhambra traceries : the Flamboyant, which our fathers so much admired, or the Perpendicular, which appeals to us more today ? The cunning of the geometry—and the use of motifs like roses, shields and medallions (not found, I think, in the " best " Moslem work) might suggest the latter ; but I do not know. To say nothing of a goodly element, here present, of the " Restored ".

The problem of restoration, in an age living more and more on its capital of beauty, is one which grows ever more fevered and besetting. In their extremes, both parties in the discussion are romantics—the one arguing that Time is a collaborator in the Beautiful, the other that the Past must be maintained in life. The first might be called the conception of the Platonist, for whom Change and Decay inspire sublime and pious thoughts ; the second is rather that of a Hegelian, who sees Time as a perambulation through a gallery, and Change merely as a juxtaposition of perfect forms. But Time, it is clear, can be a rather heavy-handed collaborator ; a ruin or a heap of stones is not a building, and lacks the beauties of wholeness and relationship of parts—even (when overgrown, like Briar-Rose's Castle or a Dravidian temple in the jungle) of visibility ! It is too far from us—indeed it may be out of sight ; and equally the mere copy is too close. We feel, and probably rightly, that there is something missing in the re-creation, or some intrusion of an alien mind—as in those historic cycles conjured before us by a Hegel or a Spengler. If a



Vermeer could be born today he could paint real Vermeers, and not mere Megeerens ; but that is certainly impossible—hard though it may be to prove it, as the success of Megeeren showed. To see things steadily and whole *sub specie aeternitatis* is the vain dream—and the animating hope—of all philosophy. If we should one day so see them, the vision would—literally—take our breath away : for no vitalising airs of desire or fear could reach us any more. Even the opinion that I now express is time-conditioned—as is the contrary opinion. Truth is the equator-line of all Excluded Middles.

One feels, in short, in the Alhambra, that reconstruction has gone a little beyond “repairs” ; though if anything is innocently reproducible, it should surely be plasterwork, which was in the first place applied with moulds. And this, unreasonably, is (or has been) the source of one of our dissatisfactions. These arabesques are so very copiable, and the Alhambra was in fact copied entire in the Great Exhibition. This naturally told against it in the days when the Victorian Age was “out” ; but Greek statuary is not condemned by the multitude of plaster casts we have seen of the Venus of Milo. And now that we are all Victorians again, the Alhambra should have an added “period” attraction ; I can imagine a careful and gracefully-nostalgic monograph upon it (the one in the Crystal Palace of course) by Mr John Betjeman. To contemplate the Grenadine palace, through the dusty family stereoscope, was one of my childhood’s thrills : among the mounted “views” of other wonders, such as the Colosseum and an ominously-leaning Pisan Tower. In short, the “fake” itself is quickly redeemed by the enchantment of Time ; like those Doric temples and “follies” erected by Georgian landscape-gardeners. However, there is a limit to everything ; and I should savagely resent the removal of Berruguete’s Renaissance palace (which I hear is threatened) to undo the vandalism of Charles Vth who demolished, to clear a space for it, some Moorish rooms. This juxtaposition of two styles, unlike the sorry mess of the Mosque of Córdoba, is here amusing and instructive ; whereas a “bigger and better” Alhambra would be a mere tourists’ honey-pot. Viewing the Alhambra in moonlight—with the nightingales in full throat—one can no doubt accept it all without any such questionings, and people it (if one will) with sherbet-sipping queens or decapitated Abencerrages. But alas, flood-lighting has

made moonlight seem artificial to us, and murder is too near to one today in Granada, the city of Lorca. The thought of the endless lorry-loads of prisoners, jolted (very slowly) up the Alhambra hill to the execution-wall in the cemetery, has rather dulled one's taste for blood. But I have seen a fine puppet-presentation of Flecker's *Hassan*—the daintiness was accentuated and the sadism subdued; and I should like to see a puppet-version, shown in the Court of the Lions, of the reign of Boabdil and the fall of Granada. There would just be room; and it would be seeing history (as one should) through the telescope's "wrong end"—the way one may some day be able to meditate on the Spanish Civil War, and more besides.

For the beauty of the Alhambra is surely in its smallness—making one see all history's pomps as toy-like. Impossible to think of this as a royal palace, with government offices and arsenals of war! The Moorish kingdom was no more, surely, than a supper-party—heavy (so to speak) with transience; whereas our Northern architecture sought to make of *permanence* something light and airy. That was our valiant attempt, which finally, inevitably, has failed—remained unfinished like the adjoining palace of Charles Vth. But the human being as a decorator can never fail. He accepts time (and death and sin and the rest), and is content to throw an embroidered veil across it, "like snow upon the desert's dusty face"—or to guide the snow, when it melts, into fountain-sprays—with a humility truer than anything "spiritual": That humility also is in Spain's Catholicism—and it may be what she has to teach us; Quixote perhaps (as Giovanni Papini held) is not only the last of the knights, but the first of the artistic livers. The fountains of the Generalife gardens which so often (one fancies) ran with blood, remind us that man also is a flower.

I contradict myself (for this is a human mood merely); but I have a right to do so in Granada, this town of contradictions—and in the Alhambra, a bower behind tawny windowless castle-walls. But I prefer to visit this bower by daylight, when I can enjoy from the *mirador* the blue lake-like plain and the scorched earth of the Albaicín. The Spaniard has been not only a conquistador and a player, but also a mystic, a contemplator; man is not only an animal and a plant, but a god. And of course the beauty of a flower implies a human consciousness to perceive it, and to set it in its own landscape. From this airy gallery I see

time, like the Andalusian *vega*, spread out below me : with around me only the serpent-ring of death, like the perpetual gleaming snows of the Sierra Nevada. I feel as if I were Nietzsche in the Enghadine, drunk with "Eternal Recurrence". A dangerous experience, not to be prolonged, but a symbol of our greatest, and last, possibility : to *see* this world of glories and calamities in order to *stop* it, and to stop our own heart (which is the world's also) in the act of seeing it.

. . . . .

Down the Alhambra hill, down the road along which those prisoners did not return, under the shade of the Duke of Wellington's elm-trees—where, by a charming anachronism, the song of bulbuls can be sometimes heard. And now, for similarity and contrast, the sacristy of the *Cartuja*. Here is Christian extravagance as compared with Moslem intimacy—display in place of daintiness : but with its own crazy pattern. A debauch of costly materials—marble, alabaster, tortoiseshell, ivory, porphyry, silver and what have you—enough to satisfy the author of "Revelation". And hung with pictures (bad ones), as if to paint the orchid. It is at least "fun", and whatever the Alhambra is it is not that : a gargantuan child's dolls' house beside a Lilliputian palace—a tour de force with perhaps its own success. To set off so much high spirits one wants no marionette-show : one could bear a real passion-drama. The very stones cry out—indeed they are shouting !

And such drama is not far away. Passing the *sagrario* (equally gaudy but less interestingly), one enters a pillared patio or cloister, adorned with mediocre frescos. Each section of the wall-space shows some scene of torture—the unhappy Carthusians here are being spitted, disembowelled, quartered, hung in droves from trees. Only in Rome, in the church of San Stefano Rotondo, had I seen so grim a feast of paint ; and this one had been the good brothers' daily fare (along with tortoises, for "fish", out of the garden) when the Cartuja was still a monastery. One's thoughts went, confusedly, to the Inquisition.

"Good heavens," I said, turning to the guide, "where and when did all this happen?"

He replied, without batting an eyelid, "In England. Under Henry VIIIth".

It may be true ; in fact I know now (having looked it up) that it *is* true—with a little pictorial license—though my school history-books did not mention it. Guides are mercifully innocent of irony. But I felt like Shaw's Mr. Broadbent, when he was rebuked by an Irish priest for superstition.

## CORDOBA

WITH Córdoba the *patios* properly commence—as distinct from the noble *courtyards* of such towns as Toledo. The patio in a dwelling-house—glimpsed through a grille, and with a clear sky or semi-transparent glass overhead—is a true garden, or rather oasis. In a cheap hotel on the other hand, with a front door and thick ground-glass roofing, it inspires claustrophobia : a horror unknown apparently to the Spaniards, whose bedrooms are so often as lightless as their troglodyte caves. It is the difference between the heaven of clear ideas in the mind of a Platonist, and the witch-cavern of the Subconscious—a likeness strengthened by the fumes of rancid cooking-oil which pervade a Spanish interior. Such a patio is not improved by the dado of garish tiles and the horseshoe-arches of the doorways ; for there is no art so *restless*, even at the best, as the art of the Moor—in imitation so nauseating. The latter suggests nothing so much as the wriggling of a fly in honey. In the desert, or the monotone Spanish plain, its elaboration can be rich and sumptuous ; those bare expanses supply the simplicity and austerity—where the eye is starved it seems right that man should be a decorator. But in the huddled interiors of a modern town one hankers for a Dutch plainness and for “ still life ” : gay chintzes and a red-cheeked chambermaid.

That sympathetic writer Mr. Edward Hutton, has rather over-embalmed Córdoba in his Pateresque prose. He writes (or wrote, in *The Cities of Spain*) : “ Cordova is an image of desolation, tragic and lamentable. She is like a ruined sepulchre forgotten in the midst of the desert from which even the dead have stolen away. She is a dead city of the dead, an immense catacomb of



pallid gold bleached to the whiteness of the unburied bones of man." (A little perverse, this, for honest whitewash!) "Everywhere there is the odour of death . . . suffocating in its horror . . . It was as if I had come upon some old dead city of Egypt, forgotten beside the Nile." That was not exactly the impression I received from Córdoba (rather to my disappointment, for it is thus I had always imagined it.) It seemed to me a pleasant little market-town of low white houses, with many glimpses of feathery fern behind lovely wrought-iron grilles. Coming from Ireland, I am used to whitewashed towns, in a somewhat careless state of preservation—some of them, like Galway, rather diminished since the Middle Ages. To be sure, Córdoba is a little changed from the days when she was the centre of civilisation and learning, with 3,000 mosques, 80,000 palaces, 900 public baths and 70 libraries—the chief of them housing 400,000 books, and even the catalogue comprising 44 volumes. (As a user of public libraries, I dream of that catalogue! If, indeed, these figures are to be believed.) But that was ten centuries ago—a generous stretch by modern time-schedules. Mr. Hutton's elegy really makes better sense in reference to Medina al Zahra, three miles outside the town—"once a fair and stately palace", and possibly the greatest palace ever raised; only that there, scarcely a trace remains of the glory that once blushed and bloomed. In this instance at least, the Christians did their work thoroughly.

Writing about the Christianised "Mezquita", Mr. Hutton continues in a mounting chant: "In the broken heart of this beautiful temple they have built their church; in the midst of this forest, so strange and lovely, they have hidden the most brutal of their dreams . . . That obscene Baroque cathedral in its fantastic madness, its vulgar ostentation, its ruthless sacrifice of even the loveliest thoughts to its own lust, is rather a brothel than a church . . ." Tut, tut! It is not at all like that. But this was written in 1906, when Baroque was not yet the thing; and Mr. Hutton writes often with great sensitivity upon architecture. It was indeed the strangest notion to plant a choir and chancel within the four-square box-like walls of a Moorish mosque, where they (and the rather pathetic side-chapels) seem lost in a jungle of low columns, striped like fair-green poles. I cannot agree with those who find the blend a happy one; and the Spaniards, if their motive was envy, have certainly here "cut off their nose to

spite their face ". The entrance on the charming orange-court has been blocked, and the ceiling pressed down, by the additions—which are themselves, as a result, still further hidden in a catacomb-like obscurity. The Mezquita, as it seems to me, is a horrid confusion of fine things—lacking both the swaying harmony of a Moslem interior and the articulated outline of a Catholic church : a junk-store of splendid bric-à-brac, where one expects the howls of dervishes to mingle with one's prayers, and the priest in the confession-box to smite the astonished penitent with a scimitar.

Be that as it may, it is excitement to a philosopher to wake up in the town of Seneca, of Averroës and of Maimonides ; it is true to say, in Córdoba, that the ghosts are more real than the living men. Only, I do not believe in ghosts ; like Averroës, who gave Aristotle to the Middle Ages, I do not believe in a soul. If these thinkers seem here to be close at hand, it is partly because one has " brought them with one ", partly inasmuch as they are still potent factors in the thing called Spain. If the Spanish character appears like a reflex of their thought, it is not because they still live in some ghostly heaven, but because they once lived on earth. Each crumbling moment is in fact a body which gives up its " soul ", like a crushed flower which yields its scent ; the Past (that very mysterious non-existing " fact ") is the true world of Essences. When we " see ghosts " or converse with spirits, it is a trick of memory—memory either in the head or in the bones.

In short, apart from literary whimsy, I am near to these three masters in Córdoba—the Roman, the Arabian and the Jew—because they represent three strands in the Spanish nature, and even in Spanish religion. Seneca stands for that Stoicism of which the finest modern voice is Santayana ; it is the true strength of Spain—often confused with Moslem fatalism. The Castilian, at least, is a harder man than any Moslem. He bears the ills he knows in preference to flying to others that he knows not of ; a point of view that is sensible and not servile—more reasonable perhaps than imaginative. Stoicism means living in the moment, without either much foresight or much idealism : enjoying the same fiestas, suffering from the same famines—rejoicing without getting drunk, begging without a whine, giving and taking without excessive calculation. It does not mean the notion that God, the Chess-player, moves His pawns about in a mysterious way ; the

Spaniards treat God as they treat the *señores*, with a grumbling familiarity—and they like to remind Him that He also suffered once, and can suffer still. When St. Teresa, with two of her nuns, had crossed a river in flood at some risk to their lives, she protested to God against such treatment. "That is what my friends must expect," replied the Omnipotent. "And perhaps that is why you have so few of them," the Saint riposted. This is Stoicism—and its offspring, Humour. It is the fatalism of natural kings and queens, of weather-wise sea-captains : and very sympathetic to that other great colonising race, the English. An admirable philosophy, but not very philosophical ; and Seneca was not a great philosopher—nor personally very admirable or humorous either. Stoicism without humour is apt to be a bore ; and some Spaniards (and some Englishmen) are boring.

Averroës, my second Cordovan, was that commentator of Aristotle who was first felt to be a godparent, and later a bugbear, by the Christian Schoolmen. There is a picture in a church in Palma which represents him in the guise of a serpent, writhing under the heel of the blessed Raimon Lull. (But the great Raymond would have seen him more justly.) Averroës was scarcely more lucky with the Caliphs, who imposed on him an unpleasant if moderate penalty ; he was condemned to stand at the Mosque's gate (here in Córdoba), and be spat upon by the whole congregation, each in their turn, as they came out. His errors, both in Christian and Moslem eyes, were mainly two : he affirmed the eternity of Matter (as *Potency*), and denied the immortality of the Soul. Man's intelligence, for Averroës, was but the lowest in a series of intelligences, all "emanating" from God and identified with the heavenly orbs—in this instance (that of reason) with the Moon. For this whole discussion was bemused by the classic confusion of *Form* and *Mind* : the spheres were perfect forms, *ergo* pure spirits or media of the Divine Mind—a conception basic to the still-flourishing science of astrology. The Moon was the "Active Intellect", one for all men, in respect to which your mind and mine are mere reflecting mirrors, turned this way and that. A charming theory, very proper to Andalusia—land of guitars and nightingales, where even the Crescent mellowed into fullness ; a land where that murky thing the "personality" is not yet born, and the cool light of a Latin logic—shining for all—compensates for the burning outward sun.

Maimonides, the greatest of the trio, is for Judaism what Aquinas is for Catholics—the reconciler of Aristotle and the Hebrew Scriptures, who introduced, however, the solvent of reason into the poetic fabric. For Maimonides, God was beyond predicates, as Jehovah was unnameable for the Jews; to call Him even “good” was to make Goodness an idol—a real perversion, as our Christian history proves. Preoccupied, like all men of his time, with the problem of immortality, Maimonides’ answer recalls that of Spinoza—in many ways his follower, and likewise of Spanish “Sephardic” origin. Briefly, he granted immortality to the Wise and not to the Unwise. Such immortality, one supposes, was little more than an “intellectual love”, to be tasted here and now—in those instants where the polygonal figure of Time touches the circle of Eternity. Virtue was indeed its own reward for Maimonides, as for so many Jews. Though not, like the great Spinoza, reprobated by all Christians and heaped with curses by the Rabbis (“May his house become an abode of dragons, his body be thrown to serpents, and his wife be given to others to enjoy”), his life was harried and precarious. He represents to me that tragic note in the Spanish concerto, the Old Testament rigidity breaking against itself—a ground-tone deeper than the fiestas and the tinkling fountains—the fate and faith which embittered the old age of Cortés and Columbus, bred monsters in the mind of Goya, extinguished the song of Lorca, and still claims its sacrifices.

. . . . .

It was with such fancies that I loitered among the lanes of Córdoba—“wound in mind’s wandering” (as Yeats says) “as mummies in the mummy-cloth are wound”; in the town where others have thought—more cheerfully—of Mérimée’s *Carmen*. I visited the museum, where the death-mask of Valdés Léal, and the Zurbarans, tell one more of Spain than the Rodinesque sculptor Torrès or the “ninetyish” painter Ynurria. Then, the Synagogue in the *Calle de Maimonides*, with some pleasant Mudéjar work. But how small and cramped! A cave where the mother-religion wove its Talmudic dream of joy and fear. And so to the big café in the *Plaza Colón*, half expecting to find gowned students disputing, with *Videtur, Sed Contra* and *Respondetur*, the theses of Averroës.



It was a dirty tavern, chock-a-block with shouting and expectorating youths, and littered with fish-heads and rubbish—this chief café of the Western Mecca. The Cordovans of both sexes are an ugly variety of Spaniard, and the *vino negro* is bad (*sed contra*, the *vino blanco* is excellent). I caught a single repeated phrase, passed with animation from table to table—*un Azero*, as it sounded. What, I wondered, was an *Azero*? Some new kind of heretic, perhaps? Still under the spell of my Scholastic fancy, I drew the waiter into my confidence. Alas, my illusions were quickly dispelled. The cause of the excitement was a football-match, and the score (at the moment) was *one to zero*. “Ichabod”, I moaned (it looks like an anagram for Córdoba). But the *futbolistas* did not notice me.

## SEAN O’CASEY’S DEVELOPMENT OF A BASIC THEME

*By Patricia Baggett.*

SEAN O’CASEY has been either attacked or praised for his ‘radical’ ideas. Since these ideas are embodied in the themes of his plays, I see no reason for an arbitrary attempt to separate the ideas of the man O’Casey from the themes of the playwright O’Casey. I do not propose to either censure or praise these ideas but merely to give a picture of what I consider to be a chronological development of the many answers to a question—a basic question which O’Casey attempts to answer in most of his plays. This question “What is the meaning of the struggle for existence?” is of course treated in his more serious plays.

O’Casey’s techniques of presenting his ideas, I can discuss only from the reader’s point of view. This is a limitation. The success or failure of a theatrical form can only be completely and truthfully judged in reference to its actual presentation. Since

I am limited as a reader, I shall devote most of this paper to a discussion of theme. I shall discuss technique and character only as they are affected by theme.

In *Shadow of A Gunman*, O'Casey's first published play, the young poet Davoren seems to be groping for the meaning of life, for some answer, for some meaning to the struggle for existence. Not some answer in a materialistic sense of "how am I going to get something to eat tomorrow?" but rather some answer as to why one even bothers to try to get something to eat tomorrow.

Davoren is not a member of any institution, belongs to no underground movement for the liberation of Ireland, has no close friends. He sits in his room and thinks and writes.

Davoren is not even allied with an abstract love for humanity. In a speech to Seumas he says: "Damn the people! They live in the abyss, the poet lives on the mountain-top; to the people there is no mystery of colour; it is simply the scarlet coat of the soldier, the purple vestments of a priest; the green banner of a party; the brown or blue overalls of industry. To them the might of design is a three-roomed house or a capacious bed. To them beauty is for sale in a butcher's shop. To the people the end of life is the life created for them; to the poet the end of life is the life he creates for himself, life has a stifling grip upon the people's throat—it is the poet's musician. The poet ever strives to save the people; the people ever strive to destroy the poet. The people view life through creeds, through customs, and through necessities; the poet views creeds, customs, and necessities through life . . ."

This speech of Davoren's is significant because it contains many half-formed ideas which are expounded upon more fully in later plays, e.g., *Within the Gates*. It is significant here in *The Shadow of A Gunman* because it is a part of O'Casey's first attempt to answer his question—Why does one struggle for existence? In Davoren's statements that "the poet ever strives to save the people", that "life has a stifling grip upon the people's throat—it is the poet's musician", we can see his attempt to find a "cause" either patriotic or religious, any "cause" which will serve as a reason for his existence.

We can also see the conflict between Davoren's beliefs and his actions. He claims to be a poet, but by his own definition he is not a poet, for he isn't actively "striving to save the people".

Nor is he a "musician playing upon the instrument of life," for he is afraid of life—he rejects Minnie Powell's advances.

Davoren is merely sitting and thinking. As a poet he is afraid of the "actual life", feels more self-confidence and security in the life he creates for himself and yet is ashamed of his fear of the "actual life". Davoren is but "the shadow of a gunman".

And yet within his own self-created life in spite of, or shall we say because of, his being merely the shadow of a gunman, of not being actively concerned with any of the people's movements, Davoren can see precisely what the people are—and because of what he sees, he can damn the people.

Oddly enough in the resolution of the play O'Casey condemns Davoren, or himself, for being merely a shadow. This condemnation is evident when Minnie Powell is killed as a result of Davoren's fear.

In *The Shadow of A Gunman*, O'Casey has not yet found the answer as to why one struggles for existence. There are, however, definite implications that one must struggle and that one must find some reason or cause for which one can struggle, thereby giving a meaning to existence. These implications are found primarily in the character Davoren. The last note O'Casey strikes in this his first published play is that physical action is preferable to mental action, or thought.

In *Juno and The Paycock* we find another traitor in Johnny Boyle, a young man somewhat like Davoren in that Johnny too is afraid of the active life. Consequently Johnny, like Davoren, lives outside of this actual life. Captain Boyle and Joxer lives outside of this "actual life" too, but in a different manner. They are afraid, but they hide their fear, escape from it by singing and drinking. Although Mrs. Boyle and Mary fear this "actual life", they are strong in meeting it—and even enter into it. Mrs. Boyle worries with the furniture and the family debts, takes upon herself the responsibilities which should belong to Mr. Boyle. Mary has an illegitimate child, and faces the consequences of rearing it alone in a hostile society.

In the resolution of *Juno and The Paycock* we find no answer as to why one struggles for existence. There is no answer but rather an observation—according to Captain Boyle "the whole world is in a state of chassis".

Although there is no definitely stated answer in *Juno*, we find the implication as in *The Shadow of A Gunman* that it is necessary to enter into, to actively participate within this "state of chassis". There is a definite condemnation of Johnny, the traitor, and a humorous disapproval, but nevertheless still a disapproval of Captain Boyle and Joxer.

Nora Clitheroe is a young woman fighting the ignorance of her husband, his companions, and her neighbours. Jack Clitheroe makes a stupid attempt to free Ireland and better the masses by participating in a revolt organized under the Irish Citizen Army.

Nora understands that the meaning of existence is not to be found in a senseless struggle for the betterment of the masses. She lives outside of the actual life surrounding her in that she is more intelligent than either her husband or her neighbours. According to Nora the answer is not to be found in "striving to save the people" for they are ignorant, they *do* view life through "creeds, customs and necessities".

In a sense Nora can perceive the reality of the actual world more clearly than Jack Clitheroe who lives within that world through his participation in the revolt. Nora *is* living outside of the war and the struggle around her, but it is because she is living outside of the struggle that she can more clearly see the folly of those who are living within it. And it is the folly of those who promote the war which causes her death. O'Casey condemns the ignorance of those who cause her death. Thus the answer here in *The Plough and The Stars* is that there is no meaning in a purely physical struggle for a senseless "cause".

O'Casey begins to change his technique in *The Silver Tassie*. It is a transitional play, rather vague in spots as to both idea and form, and somewhat lacking in unity. However, I shall discuss O'Casey's technique later. I only mention it here because the change in technique affects the clarity of the theme.

Harry Heegan is a victim of the war—a clash which is the result of men striving for variant "causes". Before the war Harry was an active participant in life, an athlete, a healthy, vigorous young man, more active than thoughtful. His love for Jessie Taite is as vigorous and as uncomplicated as he.

But after the war, wounded because of the struggle for senseless "causes", Harry is paralyzed—as a paraplegic his physical



participation in life will be limited. However, since his inability to participate is no fault of his own, he is not condemned.

Although it is the senseless struggle which has caused Harry pain and which has resulted in his inability to actively re-enter the struggle, he still desires to participate. In the last scene there is a party—Harry is miserable because he is on the outside. And he feels outside of the party because he cannot enter into it physically. Here O'Casey implies that the senselessness of Jessie and Barney, the balloons, and the wine, are the best things—and that the only happiness lies in enjoying them, in being an active member of the party.

The play never suggests, Harry never realizes, perhaps because his inactivity is imposed upon him, that mere participation in the party will not bring happiness. Rather the play implies that such bodily activity is the reason for existence. Because of his physical inability to participate in the insensitive crassness of the party, or world, Barney's life is "a life on the ebb".

*Within the Gates* is in my opinion, the most comprehensive and the greatest of O'Casey's plays—both in theme and in form. Here too we find a change of technique. Unlike *The Silver Tassie*, partially expressionistic and partially realistic in form, *Within The Gates* represents a pure use of expressionistic technique. With this play O'Casey breaks completely from his earlier realism.

In a sense *Within the Gates* is a culmination of O'Casey's search for the meaning of existence.

The Young Woman lives outside of life too—just as did Davoren and Johnny and Joxer and Mr. Boyle and Harry. But like Nora Clitheroe, The Young Woman is not condemned for her inactivity in not allying with and physically promoting a particular institution, creed, or custom. The Young Woman is searching—that is her activity. She finds the Catholic Church inadequate, the Salvation Army, the Evangelists. Neither can she accept the inadequate assertions of the atheist, the man with the stick, (a pseudo-intellectual). She is a prostitute, but only because she is rebelling against the dogmatism of the church. Somehow she feels that there must somewhere be better answers, other better meanings to existence.

The Dreamer's answer is the best answer she finds. And the Dreamer creates his own life. He doesn't ally with any institution, or creed, or custom. He has no love for an abstract humanity.

The dreamer's activity is in his creation of his own world of song and dance. He has no purpose, no reason for creating his own world. He just doesn't like the real one.

Jannice, or The Young Woman, dies still attempting to reconcile the two—the actual world, and the Dreamer's world. And here we find O'Casey's realism in the midst of his treatment of abstract values. Jannice realizes that there are two worlds—that the Dreamer's world is better, and more real, and more true than the actual world around her with its institutions and its creeds. And yet she also realizes that she must cope with, live in, both worlds. Her answer may be found in the instances where she is forced to choose between the two. Whenever there is a choice to be made, Jannice chooses the Dreamer's world.

The Dreamer's world is a pagan world. He sees the Divine and good in the love of individuals and the love of all immanent beauty—a love which in its final and collective end arrives at the love of a Divine Being. A Divine Being represented all too inadequately by the Bishop. Although the Bishop is an inadequate representative of this God, Jannice recognizes by asking his blessing that he is *still* a representative. And she doesn't reject the God merely because the Bishop and his church are inadequate representatives.

It is important to note here that although Jannice and the Dreamer reject the institutions, creeds, and customs of the actual world, they do not expend their energies in destructive attacks. Jannice and The Dreamer are concerned with the creation of their own world and with the love and beauty they find there. They do not waste their time in attempting to destroy the institutions, creeds and customs of the actual world.

It is in *Within The Gates* that we find the old conflict between bodily participation in the actual world and spiritual creation of a different world resolved in the character of The Young Woman. It is better and also engages more mental activity for Jannice to create her own world than to merely accept the existing actual world. The physical participation in this her own world perhaps becomes less violent than her physical participation in the actual world—yet she *is* participating physically.

There is no purpose to Jannice's striving, no reason for her struggle to exist, and to decide which is the best way of the many ways. Jannice isn't striving to "save souls" like the Bishop, nor

is she striving to save humanity like the Salvation Army. The meaning of her existence is found within her struggle—"she fought the good fight".

And there is no reason for Jannice fighting the good fight—or rather there is no reason for her search for truth. The meaning and the reason are found within the fighting and the searching.

Between first performances of *Within The Gates* and O'Casey's three-act play, *The Star Turns Red*, there is a span of approximately six years. *The End of The Beginning*, a one-act comedy, was the only work published or written during this period. With the appearance of *The Star Turns Red*, we find O'Casey turned institutionalist, materialist—not in the sense of advocating any particular institution, but rather in his vehement and destructive attacks on existing institutions and in his firm belief that the "reds", if they could ever overthrow the existing institutions, would be capable of establishing the "better polis".

In *Red Roses For Me*, Ayamonn Breydan is outside of the life surrounding him in that he seems to appreciate and to understand certain problems on a somewhat higher plane than do his contemporaries. However, instead of creating his own world, he actively participates in the actual world. Although Ayamonn doesn't want war, he quite naively believes that he should lead the labour movement—that "we have prayed too long and worked too little". In a very immature song Ayamonn addresses the people, the common labourers of the city:

" Fair city, I tell thee our souls shall not slumber  
Within th' warm beds of ambition or gain :  
Our hands shall stretch out to th' fullness of labour,  
Till wondher an' beauty within thee shall reign.

We vow to release thee from anger an' envy,  
To dhrive th' fierce wolf an' sly fox from thy gate,  
Till wise men an' matrons an' virgins shall murmur  
O' city of splendour right fair is thy fate !

Fair city, I tell thee that children's white laughter,  
An' all th' red joy of grave youth goin' gay,  
Shall make of thy streets a wild harp ever sounding,  
Touch'd by th' swift fingers of young ones at play !

We swear to release thee from hunger an' hardship,  
 From things that are ugly an' common an' mean ;  
 Thy people together shall build a brave city,  
 The' fairest an' finest that ever was seen ! ”

Now the beliefs stated in this song are completely illogical and unrealistic—no more realistic than Jack Clitheroe's belief that to drive the English out of Ireland would be a guarantee of better government. One wonders too what has happened to the Davoren who, although only a shadow, did realize that “ to the people the end of life is the life created for them. (That while) the poet ever strives to save the people, the people ever strive to destroy the poet ”. Why has the reason for the struggle for existence come to be the betterment of the city. And how can anyone believe that they are going to abolish “ hunger and hardship . . . things that are ugly an' common an' mean ”. Hunger and hardship and envy and strife have always existed. Anger and envy are elements of human nature ; hunger and hardship are conditions of human existence. It is possible to control the elements of human nature and to modify the conditions of human existence, but it is quite improbable that they will ever be abolished !

But it is Ayamonn's action, his mere physical action which is sanctioned and praised in *Red Roses For Me*. And it is Sheila's inactivity which is condemned.

In speaking of Ayamonn's death the Third Man says, “ It was a noble an' a mighty death ”. The Inspector replies, “ It wasn't a very noble thing to die for a single shilling ”. Sheila answers, “ Maybe he saw the shilling in the shape of a new world ”.

Now precisely and comprehensively what this new world, by implication a new world not for just the poet Ayamonn but a new world for all people, an actual world, precisely what this new world consists of and exactly how it is to be established after the common people, the labourers, are in command is never revealed.

O'Casey the prophet continues to prophesy the advent of the kingdom in *Cock-A-Doodle-Andy* and in *Time to Go*, but never once does he present a picture of the future kingdom. In these later plays, he is either attacking the Catholic Church or he is prophesying the advent of the kingdom. These later plays are boring. They have none of the vitality of the earlier search for



truth—for a meaning to existence. O'Casey has found truth, his meaning for existence, in some colour called red. He hangs red stars about the stage, has red lights blowing on the city in the distance, mysterious red cocks running about or trees which wither when the "reds" are captured and spring to life when the "reds" escape.

Because he wraps his kingdom in mystery, (I doubt that O'Casey himself has any comprehensive picture of this kingdom) he neither enlightens nor entertains his audiences—he offends their intelligence.

In O'Casey's later work there are of course exceptions to be found in his comedies. In spite of his repetitious use of particular farcical devices, these comedies are a bit more successful than his serious, semi-tragedies.

There is a definite change in O'Casey's technique within the range of his published plays. He moves from the realism of *Shadow of a Gunman* to the complete use of expressionism in *Within The Gates*. After *Within The Gates* he uses expressionistic devices in all the published plays. He also employs a greater use of symbols. I suppose you might call this technique symbolic expressionism.

As I have stated previously I am not qualified to criticize the theatrical success or failure of his technique. Only as a reader do I make these observations. To me in *Within The Gates* O'Casey has merged the technique of expressionism with the characters and the theme in such a way that I am acutely conscious of the characters and what they are saying. I am not conscious of the *manner* in which they are speaking. In the remainder of the plays O'Casey employs expressionistic devices, but I am more aware of the devices as such than I am of what the characters are saying. Perhaps this is just as well since the characters have nothing new to say. And perhaps too this is the reason why O'Casey himself exploits the expressionistic technique in a more spectacular manner. He has to sell his plays. He has no new themes. Instead of new themes he presents new combinations.

This is true of his characters too. I don't know why but there is almost always just a variation of a particular stock figure. Davoren, Johnny, the Dreamer, Ayamonn, are all nearly the same character. Flagonson and Bull of *Time to Go* and Sylvester Heegan of *The Silver Tassie* might very well be the same character.

I do like O'Casey's introduction of songs and dances into the action of the plays. His use of various group tempos of movement and speech is perhaps best illustrated in *Within The Gates*. The chant of the Down and Outs, the sonorous tones of the Bishop, the vital and energetic song of the Dreamer all blend into what could be an almost orchestral effect. Act II of *The Silver Tassie* is interesting on paper and in my opinion would play even better on stage.

In my opinion, O'Casey in his later period merely rearranges his characters and his themes in a different expressionistic design. He has found his answer as to why one even bothers to try to get something to eat tomorrow—one has to eat in order to live, to have the energy necessary for leading the people, to have the pure physical energy to establish this new kingdom without hunger and labour, without envy and strife. This answer is set in colorful and startling expressionistic designs. The same characters are used, given different names and turned loose within the new set to re-enact O'Casey's dogmatic assertion of the truth and goodness of O'Casey's future kingdom.

Here O'Casey the poet, the creator of other worlds, has become O'Casey the critic, the destructive critic of this world. His creativity has ended in a bunch of red roses which never appear.

## SIR MAX BEERBOHM

*By Derek Stanford.*

ON Whit Monday, May 21st, eighty-three-year-old Sir Max Beerbohm, author and caricaturist, died at his villa in Rapallo, Italy. His life had been a happy one; and it was pleasant to think of him basking in the sunlight of literary esteem, long after most of his work had been accomplished. True, there were still his occasional broadcasts, on men and manners of the 'nineties, to maintain us in touch with him; but these fine-wrought

reminders were hardly needed. Gratitude for the gay entertainments which his work procured us kept the public's memory fresh ; and his seventieth birthday was marked by the founding of the Maximilians, a choice society of six hundred men of letters.

Contributor to *The Yellow Book* while he was still an undergraduate at Merton, Sir Max—despite his amused protestation of feeling himself “ a trifle outmoded ” as early as 1895—somehow escaped the fate of that epoch. Indeed, his attractive paradox consisted in being, as Thomas Moulton has said, “ the complete Eighteen-Ninety-er ” while having nothing *fin-de-siecle* about him. And yet, as the German poet Rilke remarked of an Italian painter, he “ is so full of a period that he is valid for all periods ”.

The secret of this ambiguous position resided in Sir Max's gift for parody. In appearance, he belonged to “ the Beardsley period ” with all its artifice of langour and rue. But while the typical artists of the time took their affectations seriously, Sir Max merely sported with their morbid conventions, their naive sophistication and excitement over ‘ sin ’.

Thus, when this essayist cast his words in the very “ deuce of a pose ”, one was always aware, beneath the studied syntax, of a cool ripple of detached intelligence. So it comes about that “ the incomparable Max ” (as Bernard Shaw had early dubbed him), while outwardly belonging to “ the Tragic Generation ” (Yeats' description of the men of the 'nineties), was also its most accurate satirist and critic. In his story *Enoch Soames* (1912) the perverse purism of Art for Art's sake (as customarily stated and misunderstood by its less talented extremists) is mimicked with both mockery and pity. Even Walter Pater—that shy retired master of the more precocious young men of the day—did not escape the suave but merciless process of laying-out which one of Sir Max's paragraphs effected ; and in his essay *Diminuendo* (1895) the marks of style of that solemn virtuoso, who reverently suggested that English should be written with the care one devotes to “ a dead language ”, are set forth with a deft exaggerated logic.

However, it was in Whistler's rather than in Pater's writings that Sir Max found a real affinity, their spritely impertinence and dandified air appealing more to his gay vivacious spirits than the Oxford don's decorous intentness. Indeed, it is truer to see Sir Max as a reaction against Pater's near-Pre-Raphaelite view

of life than as one of his less academic disciples such as Arthur Symons or Richard Le Gallienne. And as his art developed, the worldly touch took precedence over the manners of the study. Urbanity triumphed over the pedantic ; the drawing-room, not the library, set the tone. In a note, perhaps not entirely to be trusted, he tells us how, when young, he " found it hard to revel in so much as a single page of any writer earlier than Thackeray ". " This disability," he continues, " I did not shake off, alas, after I left school. There seemed to be so many live authors worth reading." The modish as opposed to the formally historic held the greater charm for him ; though his essay on *King George the Fourth* (1894) and his " fairy tale " *The Happy Hypocrite* (1897) show how he discovered in the Regency—as Charles Lamb discovered in Restoration comedy—" a land of cuckoldry beyond the diocese of the strict conscience ", " the Utopia of gallantry where pleasure is duty, and the manner perfect freedom".

The clear victory of the urban spirit appears in the dramatic notices (gathered together in his book *Around Theatres*, (1924) which Sir Max wrote for the *Saturday Review* between 1898 and 1910 when he succeeded Bernard Shaw at that post. Nowhere is his mobile intelligence, his tangential wit, his buoyant common-sense, his sharp unsleeping awareness of distinction, so uniformly present as in these crystal-edged critiques. For over seventy years, the English theatre has best been served by those critics who have not hesitated to express their scorn for its many puerilities. Following in the wake of Shaw, Sir Max was coolly unimpressed by the traditional glamour of the stage ; but, unlike his predecessor, he was also intellectually unmoved in the presence of the latest idea. To the staged debates of the new social drama he often preferred the vernacular genius of the music-hall or the well-made straight-play. No adventurer among the recent 'isms', his eye was for the play as it acted and not for the nourishment which it offered, at one remove, to the civic conscience.

For all his protested disdain of the mimes (as he insisted on calling the performers), he was not the half-brother of Sir Beerbohm Tree, the actor-manager, for nothing. Here, in the prose of *Around Theatres*, the now-dead art of the music-hall is severely yet lovingly assessed. George Robey, Marie Lloyd, Dan Leno, and others—a whole strata of buried British humour—lies radiantly exposed in its pages. Part of English social history before the



volcano of the First World War, the music-hall represented the popular heart and brain of the nation ; and few critics were able to approach it without a trace of condescension or equally irrelevant romanticism. Unlike Shaw, Sir Max was free from intellectual patronage. As with Cocteau, his notion of the artist was conceived in the image of a tight-rope walker : a person performing with skill and poise rather than as one manipulating ideas.

Virtuosity certainly played a considerable part in his own productions ; classical by temperament as he was, he did not lend credit to those interpretations which read into his work some or other symbolic meaning. Thus, in a Note to the 1946 edition of his novel *Zuleika Dobson : or an Oxford Love Story*, he rejected all talk of a secondary meaning. " When, in 1911, this book was first published," he wrote, " some people seemed to think it was intended as a satire on such things as the herd instinct, as feminine coquetry, as snobbishness, even as legerdemain ; whereas I myself had supposed it was just a fantasy ; and as such, I think, it should be regarded by others." But artists sometimes claim too little for their work, just as at other times they incline to claim too much. At any rate certain readers have felt, in the mass-suicide of the flower of young Oxford, a premonition of the holocaust to come just three years after the book was written. Perhaps this suggestion of prophetic knowledge stems from the strange coincidence of fictional words and historical events rather than from the tale's intrinsic plot. But whatever be the cause, the *frisson* it gives birth to is there to heighten the pathos of a story seemingly devised in mock-heroic measure. Another reading of *Zuleika Dobson* is to see the heroine as a *femme fatale* embodiment of the forces of Aestheticism. Already in the 'nineties, Richard Le Gallienne had written (in a poem by that title) of *Beauty Accurst*, and of how its amoral cult was supplanting the old loyalties of duty and faith in men's hearts. But, again, the symbolism should not be insisted on ; for all that such other-than-literal readings can truly and honestly achieve is to account, in however crude a manner, for the ground-swell of a deeper meaning which seems to resound through the story. Despite its accomplished mock-heroic manner, *Zuleika Dobson* appears to belong to a different category of art to Pope's ironic masterpiece *The Rape of the Lock*. Of course, we recognise the irony in *Zuleika*, but we also sense some further

quality ; and it is this element which leads us to seek for some figurative purpose within the story.

So light-handed has been Sir Max's work that many have assumed it heartless. But heaviness may result from other causes than a full burden of emotion ; and, conversely, lightness of touch may be no stranger to tender feelings. Two of Sir Max's pieces particularly demonstrate this. *The Dreadful Dragon of Hay Hill*, a fantasy conceived during the 1914-18 War (though not published till 1928), translates the darkness dwelling over London in terms of a story of the Stone Age, whose setting is the ground where Piccadilly now stands. And once more through the tripping prose there passes a cool breeze-like shiver at the ignorant workings of man's will and his fumbling attempts to find a solution. But the high-water mark of his humane expression is reached in his tale of *William and Mary* (1920). This is presented in the form of an autobiographical reminiscence, and in its natural simplicity of narration is one of the most poignant examples of shorter fiction in this century.

Those who believe that Sir Max's art was consummate from the beginning and had not developed since have only to compare *William and Mary*, and its clear direct tribute of feeling, with such a piece of *chinoiserie* as *Yai and the Moon* and the semi-prose-poems *Words for Pictures* (both of which were written in the 'nineties) to see the gain in colloquial clearness as well as in a deeper intuition of life.

In the long, run, however, it is as a parodist and cartoonist (with pen, brush, and pencil) that Sir Max must receive highest honour. *A Christmas Garland* (1912)—in which he gayed the verbal quirks and caprices of Kipling, George Moore, Henry James, and others—should be included in the syllabus of anyone studying contemporary English letters. Set in his critical pillory, these authors yield up their technical secrets and not a few blemishes of mind and heart. *Poet's Corner* (1904) effects, by means of pictorial illustration, what *A Christmas Garland* achieves through printer's ink, and is to-day the best-known work of Sir Max as a cartoonist.

Viewing life from his own inimitable angle, he dealt dexterously and quizzically with it. To do justice to him in plain straightforward speech is like asking a giant ape to thread a needle.

# VERSE CHRONICLE

*By Padraic Fallon*

Good verse must always drag itself through stanzas of question marks, answering some in its limited way, but leaving the reader too to frame himself from his own replies. We never know really what we ask of poetry, and when a good poet puts us into his question-time, there is no one to gong us when we come up with the near-miss or with the irrelevant and ridiculous. Mr. John Wain has a capacity for making me feel wrong from the start. Yet I must regard *A WORD CARVED ON A SILL* as at least one voice that does not cry from a wilderness. The prophecy may be petty, but the stuff somehow seems to be waiting on the poet as silences wait on a man until he switches off the engine and lets things do their work for him. Putting it into critic's cliché, I don't think this poet has found his theme, the whole knit of man and time.

The authentic poem, I fancy, never has one tongue in its cheek. It must believe in its own rhetoric, though the content of one poem may contradict another. Mr. Wain's reasons for not writing orthodox nature poetry, if there is such a thing as orthodox nature poetry which is not merely decorative verse, are just reasons for writing the nature poem he prints under that title :

The January sky is deep and calm.  
The mountain sprawls in comfort, and the sea  
Sleeps in the crook of an enormous arm.

And nature from a simple recipe—  
Rocks, water, mist, a sunlit winter's day—  
Has brewed a cup whose strength has dizzied me.

So little beauty is enough to pay ;  
The heart so soon yields up its store of lore,  
And where you love you cannot break away.

So much for relevant nature, the thing that got into the picture and behind it, but the poet goes on :

So sages never found it hard to prove  
Nor prophets to declare in metaphor  
That God and Nature must be hand in glove.

And this became the basis of their lore.  
Then later poets found it easy going  
To give the public what they bargained for.

And like a spectacled curator showing  
The wares of his museum to the crowd  
They yearly waxed more eloquent and knowing . . .

To moderns who devoutly hymn the land.  
 So be it, each is welcome to his voice ;  
 They are a gentle, if a useless, band.

(Hum. Mr. Wain must have slept through at least a dozen mighty symphonists) I let him finish :

But leave me free to make a sterner choice ;  
 Content, without embellishment, to note  
 How little beauty bids the heart rejoice,

How little beauty catches at the throat,  
 Simply I love this mountain and this bay  
 With love that I can never speak by rote,

And where you love you cannot break away.

So there we are. A nature poem has got itself written after all, even to the inevitable gush, and if Mr. Wain has reacted differently from a thousand others, I am blind and cannot see wherein the difference lies. The thing is that he has added some embellishment of reluctance. Wordsworth said Yea and stood over it Northumbrian style.

Feeling, of course, there must be, and inherited, since the skeleton alters little inside any specified number of centuries ; so, we need not expect Mr. Wain to acknowledge a stimulus much differently from—say—Tennyson. He may amend an idiom and be merely an accompaniment to a tradition, as I judge him to be, and as Yeats was publicly and oratorically, but in a poem such as this he is playing the man in the picture gallery, I-know-nothing-about-pictures-but-I-like-this-one, and that is not an attitude one expects from the artist. It is a playing down to lower levels.

Cleverness, too, can have such a magisterial air that one can quite easily suspect its wisdom. We get this kind of thing too easily from Mr. Wain—he is speaking of a Keats letter to Fanny Brawne :

It seems the poet made a bad mistake.  
 How could she know how awful passion was ?  
 The lesson is that breaking hearts must break . . .

But this was not a case of HE and She,  
 It was a case of He himself alone.  
 No lock will open till you fetch the key.

The fact is that the art of throwaway is difficult, and is too but another artifice. And you've got to have something good to throwaway before it is effective. The elegiac verses to a college porter, for instance, seem to me to be a lapse in literary taste. And for all the good things in the book, I find the poems lack definition of attitude. Somewhere in the making of most of them something has slipped, like a face or a shoulder, but the slip actually is that the two languages used by the poet have not yet become shadows of each other.



It is the time of the young. Mr. Wain is one of nine young poets gathered in selection in a new anthology called *NEW LINES*, the editor being a young poet himself, Robert Conquest. Of Mr. Conquest it could be said that he, more than most, has given his verse a sort of critical occupation, as if Art was a theme and not a way. Out of his own seven poems in *NEW LINES*, there are three that dial their references to the art of Poetry. Too many, Mr. Conquest, when there is still original sin and all the decent archives of this post-Eden and architectural flesh . . .

Now darkness falls. And poems attempt  
Light reconciling done and dreamt.  
I do not find it in the rash  
Disruption of the lightning flash.

Those vivid rigours stun the verse  
And neural structure still prefers  
The moon beneath whose moderate light  
The great seas glitter in the bight.

It is one way of putting a style together, neat, accurate and clipped after the manner of one who reduces spacious thinking to the point of aphorism, but set such a style striving with a theme like that *Flesh-and-Blood Nantucket* poem and *Moby Dick* just flicks it off his fabled tail. Poetry is more than ideas about other poems or conclusions, studied or artful, about the possible meeting-places of the ideal and the actual, it is more than talking Art—which is the commonplace business of the critic or even the philosopher, and while I can knock out a pleasant half-hour with those delicate jaunts of the editor, and he is impressive, I come to the conclusion that he knows all the corridors but has ignored the rooms, the living rooms and the great basement kitchen where all the work is going on.

Of those nine poets, who stands out for honours to come? A major question, my masters, and where all are expert users of the referring phrase that brings more than one level to the surface of experience, I could not dare to wager on the survivor who will be the winner. Make no mistake about it. Those nine race for the eventual honour. But if I try to remember poems that hit the memorable, it is one short poem by John Holloway that comes up, *JOURNEY THROUGH THE NIGHT*, which in most ways is neither bright nor clever verbally, one that slip-slides gently into the gesture of drama and so may not fit the theorems of the pure lyricists. Then there is D. J. Enright, always a delight in his unexpectedness. His interests—and contours—go much beyond the verbal—

And the Laughing Hyena, cavalier of evil, as volcanic as the rest ;  
Elegant in a flowered gown, a face like a bomb-burst,  
Featured with fangs and built about a rigid laugh,  
Ever moving, like a pond's surface where a corpse has sunk . . .

There is a certain solidity even in this picturesque and high kick-of-the-heels. Here is a person pinching his gods and his gear into a world-shape and pushing them into the market-place to dance into high seriousness.

And what about Donald Davie? There is equipment enough for ten poets in this one alone and a rhetorical wit that he handfasts steadily to restrain abundance. And that in itself maybe is some sort of stricture, for it is never enough to consolidate a culture. A poet should make one. Dr. Davie says such wise things that we realise that the body has not had its full share in the speech. Let me quote REJOINDER TO A CRITIC, which could be a reply to myself in my present state of mind.

You may be right : " How can I dare to feel ? "  
 May be the only question I can pose,  
 " And haply by abstruse research to steal  
 From my own nature all the natural man "  
 My sole resource. And I do not suppose  
 That others may not have a better plan.

And yet I'll quote again, and gloss it too  
 (You know by now my liking for collage) :  
 Donne could be daring, but he never knew,  
 When he inquired, " Who's injured by my love ? "  
 Love's radio-active fall-out on a large  
 Expanse around the point it bursts above.

" Alas, alas, who's injured by my love ? "  
 And recent history answered : Half Japan !  
 Not love, but hate ? Well, both are versions of  
 The " feeling " that you dare me to. Be dumb !  
 Appear concerned only to make it scan.  
 How dare we now be anything but numb ?

Which is asking us to lay down our arms before the cannon-ball shoots off our legs. Provided things live it doesn't matter very much if they don't scan.

And Mr. Thom Gunn, more than interesting, a talent authentic in its vitality, gifted too with the simplicity that gives its real task to the metaphor . . .

Now it is fog, I walk  
 Contained within my coat ;  
 No castle more cut off  
 By reason of its moat ;  
 Only the sentry's cough,  
 The mercenaries talk.

Miss Elizabeth Jennings takes a crystal rather than a looking-glass as her symbol, and those mutations in clarity that are her poems have some affinity with the water colour, and always seem to be at barely one remove from some troubling emotion. She is a cool poet, however, and translates the spectator into a mild standstill where he can recollect rather than collect, himself from a delicate fluency that has flown around him from the distances. Some one has said that emotion has really no part in art at all, and that the Aesthetic are conclusions arrived at in tranquility, simply by moving away the obstacles to understanding ;

I feel this is what Miss Jennings does all the time. I see better for having read her, or think I do, so those poems are legitimate in their way, and—let me say it without reservation and old fashionedly—lovely and thinking pieces of workmanship.

The P.E.N. anthology for 1956, edited by Stephen Spender, Elizabeth Jennings and Dannie Abse, comprises poems from 46 poets, from the late Walter de la Mare to Mr. Abse himself. It will bring the usual recriminations for inclusion and non-inclusion, and indeed it is difficult to see why fifty percent. of the stuff was printed at all. A book not to be compared for quality with NEW LINES, which at least is a book that has been thoroughly vetted. It is relieved, certainly, by good work—in their middle-sorts—from Auden and Louis MacNeice and from a young poet, Philip Larkin whom I omitted to draw attention to in my note on NEW LINES. Larkin has that undervalued art we call entertainment, which means there is more than verbal interest to his poems. He goes for his themes to his life, like a prose writer, and knows what hurts him into song, I think he has the reservoir for a lot of good work to come.

Another anthology, SEVEN CENTURIES OF POETRY, selected by A. N. Jeffares, sweeps us from the Fifteen Hundreds to the present day, including among the current poets, Austin Clarke and Robert Farren—neither at his best. This poem of Clarke's, however, demonstrates the gay virility of his work in the Twenties, it is a Jack Yeats in colour and content.

What more is there to be said of such a treasure Galleon? From Shakespeare on, the whole galaxy. Perhaps there is more concentration on the Eighteenth century than is usual, though I am not one to agree with the editor that "few people realise its richness until they have themselves passed from the romantic subjectivity of adolescence into what may be some degree of rationality, some greater social consciousness".

Do I detect here conscious or unconscious criticism of the real content of most worthwhile poetry? "Appear concerned only to make it scan." A fear of raptures. A putting of the poet's shoulder to the great wheel of logical social thinking, which, by the way, changes from season to season. The poetry of the Thirties should be the poet's reply to this falsification of his business.

The editor, however, has done his work well and his selection should help students on the royal journey beyond the purple.

POEMS, by Fredogond Shove, could embarrass me on occasion, and to be frank I cannot read but only dip. Say they make an album for the little inlaid table where the sewing is kept, they are just as harmless and as decorative.

SEVEN CENTURIES OF POETRY. Edited by A. N. Jeffares. (Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 21/-).

POEMS. By Fredogond Shove. (Cambridge University Press. 7/6).

NEW LINES. Edited by Robert Conquest. (MacMillan, 12/6).

NEW POEMS, 1956. A P.E.N. Anthology. (Michael Joseph, 12/6).

A WORD CARVED ON A SILL. By John Wain. (Routledge & Keegan Paul, Ltd. 10/6).

# DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Levenihal

CANDIDA. By Bernard Shaw. Gate Theatre.

ANDROCLES AND THE LION. By Bernard Shaw. Cyril Cusack Productions. Gaiety Theatre.

THE RISING OF THE MOON. By Lady Gregory. Cyril Cusack Productions. Gaiety Theatre.

EARLY AND OFTEN. By John McCann. Abbey Theatre playing at The Queen's Theatre.

THE GOLDEN CUCKOO. By Denis Johnston. Cyril Cusack Productions. Gaiety Theatre.

For some inexplicable reason it has been asserted that Dublin has not been doing all it might to celebrate the G.B.S. centenary. The evidence is all to the contrary. In the previous number of this Magazine there was a review of *Pygmalion* as produced by the Olympia Theatre and we have now further plays as the heading to this article shows. I should have added the Longford production of *Mrs. Warren's Profession* but I had already left for my vacation when this was put on at the Gate Theatre. Considering this play, it is not so remarkable that so many of Shaw's works caused trouble on their first appearance. Himself a storm centre, a propagator of causes as unconventional as they were unpopular, it followed that his plays often riled authority as well as Victorian smugness and Pecksniffian myopia. Today we are not so easily shocked but it is comforting to think that while the Lord Chamberlain was protecting the eyes and ears of the British public by banning *The Shewing up of Blanco Posnet*, the Abbey Theatre, believing itself outside the jurisdiction of this despotic censor, was able to demonstrate to the world how moral, how religious, this Shavian experiment in melodrama really was.

It has also just been said that this country should have found a stage for Shaw's particularly Irish play *John Bull's Other Island* in this year of his centenary. But it must be taken into account that the author's origin shows itself throughout all his works and that the influence of the latter play is marked in many of the creations of Abbey playwrights, the most notable being D'Alton's *This Other Eden* which had a record run a few years ago.

The Sunday newspapers—the more serious ones—have been printing articles assessing the Shaw contribution and his place in literary and dramatic history. The unusual situation of the celebration of a centenary so soon after the death of a writer brought with it curiously contradictory conclusions. He is a rash critic who will ascribe or deny immortality to an artist whose memory is still so fresh. We do not, however, lack commentators who are prepared to confuse



rashness with courage and leave their decisions for posterity's appraisal, if posterity will bother at all. And so we have maturity in the voice of A. J. P. Taylor expressing itself petulantly about Shavian senility and youth talking through Colin Wilson risking the aspersion of callowness in boldly regarding G.B.S. as a mystic and prophesying a more general appreciation of his stature by the next generation.

When Gerard Healy chose *Candida* for presentation at the Paris Drama Festival, allowing us a preview at the Gate Theatre, he may not have selected one of Shaw's best efforts but he did hit on one suited to Eithne Dunne's talents. I have little doubt that her performance of the title part would have pleased the author himself for there was enough realism in her interpretation to recall what we know to have been Janet Achurch's approach—one which Shaw approved to the extent that he would listen to no other suggestions as to who should be given the part. To this realism Eithne Dunne added a romantic touch, thus providing the right complement to give verisimilitude to a rôle which, as written, is a creature that could only have lived in Shaw's imagination; his women were rarely made of feminine flesh lacking even synthetic female hormones in their blood. The Paris comments bear witness to our own favourable reactions to this production for they praised unstintedly all the actors as well as the choice of play. Christopher Casson as Mr. Burgess made *Candida's* father a real person even if Shaw or Mr. Casson couldn't convince us that such a daughter could have been begotten by so cockneyfied a parent. Desmond Jordan's Marchbanks was sufficiently removed from the wolf to make us smile at his calf love whilst Aiden Grennell relied on the spectacled, droning parson of stage tradition to fill his small niche in the play as the Rev. Alexander Mill.

Cyril Cusack came out boldly with a Souvenir Programme for his Shaw Centenary production of *Androcles and the Lion* at the Gaiety Theatre. In this were published canvassed opinions of various celebrities on the genius of G.B.S. They were naturally all more than complimentary with one exception. Naturally, too, Sam Beckett in his new approach to drama could not accept as a master one whose apple-cart he was unintentionally engaged in upsetting.

*Androcles and the Lion* has been but rarely revived and the audience settled down to enjoy G.B.S. in one of his seeming frivolous moods—a pantomime of intellectual fodder and children's circuses, of cunning theology and rumbustious clowning. And so we loved Maureen Potter's *Lion* to whom any male Christian martyr would have gladly been thrown and envied Cyril Cusack's *Androcles* for the intimate footing (the operative word) he had reached with this grateful royal beast. The rather too Girttonish Lavinia of Maureen Cusack was redeemed by her charm and muscular Christian action Ferrovius found the right balance; between irrepressible force and repentance in Godfrey Quigley's acting. A nicely conceived and regionally accented Menagerie Keeper should help Dermot Kelly to go far in his stage career. An imaginative production by Alan Simpson and an original setting by Michael O'Herlihy made this a presentation worthy of the occasion.

On the other hand Lady Gregory's *Rising of the Moon*, which followed, was disappointing. The stage seemed too large, the setting too fussy, to house the Sergeant and the Ballad Singer. Seumas Kavanagh in the former role appeared to be ill at ease. His final line about the thousand pounds reward and promotion

sure and his wonder whether he was as big a fool as he thought he was, fell unexpectedly flat from the lips of one of our best comedians. Cyril Cusack was likewise unhappy as the Ballad Singer. He did not succeed in suggesting that there was a boat waiting to help him make his getaway and his ballad singing lacked the dramatic conspiratorial note.

We have to report another new play by John McCann at the Abbey Theatre. *Early and Often* is described as an election comedy and deals with the treasons and stratagems that bring the spoils of Mayordom to their artful users. The theme is rather thin and the friendly satire makes no call on the grey matter of the audience. The characters are two-dimensional without perspective, offering no depths to be plumbed. Nevertheless it can be an evening's entertainment to watch the hardened Alderman Flannery plotting his rise to the Mansion House only to have the progressive line of his graph rudely deviated by his secretary who beats him in the election. The result is not tragic for the Alderman for he may enjoy vicariously the fruits of office through his daughter who, luckily for him, is affianced to his rival. More might have been made of whatever excitement the progress of an election might awaken in an audience in doubt as to the result. Certainly in a film the swaying fortunes of the poll count would have been given the maximum of what might pass as dramatic tension. Uniformly good acting could not make this play any more important than this sketchy summary suggests and the Abbey Theatre adds yet another house filler to its garnered store so that once again the box-office receipts may supplement the wholly inadequate State subsidy.

Cyril Cusack revived Denis Johnston's *The Golden Cuckoo* which does not seem to differ much from the original production. This piece might well have been in the line of the great plays that demand justice for the individual and which show how conspiracies of silence and collaboration with formal authority can destroy elementary justice. Honesty of purpose, insistence on his rights in the case of the Obituarist, Mr. Doderight, only land him in a lunatic asylum. We should have been moved to pity—the pity we feel for King Lear—at this tragic sequel to actions prompted by the highest motives but we are left in doubt as to whether he is not really insane and better off in the mental home which he finally chooses as being preferable to life outside its walls. The satire is bitter enough. The very triviality of his first demand, that he should be given the exact payment for a cancelled obituary notice that had been commissioned; the rebellion which he leads without followers against an unjust government, show how poor a chance the Little Man has against the forces of authority. But there is too much in the way of excessive comedy bordering on farce to make the play altogether acceptable as a serious contribution. One cannot, however, but admire Denis Johnston's technical skill. The first act takes place in a mews and since the characters do not know each other their self introduction serves the purpose of introducing them to the audience—a decided improvement on the Victorian servants who talked to each other about their employers' histories in the bad old days of the theatre.

Cyril Cusack took most of the acting honours in his delineation of Doderight, making us lean more on the side of pity than of laughter. Maureen Potter as Mrs. Vanderbilt kept us wholly in a state of merriment whilst the remaining actors played their parts efficiently. A special word of praise must go to Seumas Kavanagh for his impersonation of a cabman.

Art Notesby Arland Ussher

DRAWINGS AND PORTRAITS BY KOERT DELMONTE. Little Theatre, BROWN THOMAS.

OIL PAINTINGS AND WATER-COLOURS BY JAMES LE JEUNE. Little Theatre, BROWN THOMAS.

WATER-COLOURS BY CARMEL FLYNN. The Country Shop.

SCULPTURE BY TREVOR COX. Dublin Painters' Gallery.

IRISH EXHIBITION OF LIVING ART. National College of Art.

PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS OF CHINA BY MARIAN JEFFARES. Ritchie Hendriks Gallery.

The "Little Theatre" Gallery this Summer has enabled us to compare two widely-dissimilar talents, in the Dutch artist K. Delmonte and the French Canadian J. Le Jeune. Mr. Delmonte is an architectural draughtsman, whose scenes (especially those of his native country) are occasionally decorative, but inclined to be generalised and sketchy, and almost empty of human life and occupations. Such drawings are like the books of "Views" which the tourist buys as souvenirs in cathedral towns, and does not open again. The artist's picture of our G.P.O., with the O'Connell Monument and the Pillar shoved into an impossible perspective, lacked the Dublin feeling of space; and why had the Liberator to be changed into King Charles the First? Such liberties, of course, would not matter at all in works of imaginative re-creation; but in simple illustrations they seem slapdash, and "picturesque" in the bad sense. One wishes Mr. Delmonte would go all-out abstractionist—a genre for which his vigorous sense of design (as in *Bombed Houses London* and *View on Clonskea*) would seem well-adapted. His portraits in oils however, as here shown, are academic, drab in colour, and rarely capture the subject; though the Manet-like *Miss Fran Fagan* had competence. In the portrait of Mrs. Josephine Lyons (in which the purple dress was well painted), the lady had been forced to adopt, apparently, a posture between sitting and lying, to make her head fit into the canvas.

If portraiture shows Mr. Delmonte at his weakest, it shows Mr. Le Jeune at his best; and that best is very good indeed. This artist's palette in landscape is inclined to be over-sombre; in his portraits, on the other hand, his low tones give depth and background, and his subjects are almost startling in their truth and reality—seen with a touch of humour which stops short of caricature. The portrait of the late "Ned" Sheehy, with his russet coat toning in beautifully with the cream and blacklead curtain, is a perfect study, based on a subtle scheme of cones; it ought definitely to be acquired by the Friends of the National Collections, as a memorial of a notable and well-loved Irishman. No less fresh and well-realised were *Head of a Man*, *Mr. O'Neil*, and many of the child-portraits. The large portrait of Miss Stephanie Wallace, with its gradation of blue tones, would be a very fine work indeed, but for something conventional in the pose and the turn of the head; and in *Repose* and the portrait of Charles Dickson, competence is in danger of becoming slickness. Another sort of danger is



observable in his street-scenes, which verge on the trick-snapshot in their massed, blurred, crowd-effects. In these and his landscapes, Mr. Le Jeune shows much sharp observation, but little sense of design or plastic feeling in his colour—which is too often cold and flat. In both respects he seems more successful in *aquarelle*; *Italian Church* had the virile gaiety of a Brabazon, and *Doorway* something of the deft economy and grace of Chinese brushwork.

Richness and clarity of colour are more in evidence in the watercolours of Carmel Flynn, who has made quite astonishing progress since we last saw her work. Her talent is, perhaps, a slighter one, and she fails in dealing with complicated themes; but her flower-pieces show not only depth of colour but delicate pattern, ing. No. 18, with its single rose in a pewter vase and transparent greens, had an almost gem-like translucency, and the two pictures of Gladioli a most satisfying rhythm. Miss Flynn's work is far from the usual "seed-packet" flower-pieces, turned out by so many painstaking and untalented ladies; and I may add that her pictures were very modestly priced.

Trevor Cox, whose sculpture was recently shown, is a careful and accomplished craftsman, in a number of media and a number of styles. It is, perhaps, too soon to expect in so adventurous an experimenter a strong individual accent; but certainly the variety of idioms is a little bewildering. Irish and Buddhist iconography, Rhineland primitives, Congo totem-poles, Chinese animal-sculpture,—all these are here (the last delicious, in his diminutive clay models of cats): as well as such contemporary influences as Henry Moore and Francis Bacon. There was even a hint of Epstein's *Lady Gregory* (in Charlemont House) in the shape and poise of his *Head of a Girl*. Sometimes there seemed a discordancy of mood in the works themselves; the starkness of his *Pieta* was marred by the encompassing figures of (apparently) dancing-girls, and the lithe dynamic lines of *The Risen Christ* jarred a little with the tortured abstraction which took the place of a head. Mr. Cox can achieve real though slightly unnerving feeling, as in the wire-strung reptilian fantasy *Resting* (which we should hate to introduce into any rest-chamber); but in general this sculpture must be adjudged "literary", inasmuch as there is too little bond between idea and material. Mr. Cox's wool-embroideries, in particular, do not suit his austere religious themes, and (in their suggestion of Victorian tea-cosies) give an effect of drabness.

The Living Art Exhibition, this year, refutes at least the charge of a growing tight exclusiveness; it is remarkable for the number of new exhibitors, almost all of interest. It is gratifying also to note that Irish talent has not been eked out, so much as on some previous occasions, with loans from abroad—which have too often been both mediocre and unrepresentative. The only loan picture in the present show, *La Vache*, by a French painter who conceals himself modestly under the name "Patricx", is a lovely work. It possesses, what few of our leading Irish artists but Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Mahood ever give us, real quality in paint; and while almost geometric in design, the animal is most tensely, quiveringly, alive.

Of the "old guard", Neville Johnson is here with four quite dissimilar pictures, of which *No Vile Men* is an excellent semi-abstraction of the rather dry and celebrated Nash-Sutherland school; *Dark Head* has real mystery and lyricism; but *Head of a Clown*, though technically brilliant, seemed to me hard and overemphatic. One cannot help feeling that Mr. Johnson is still experimenting,



and has not yet found the manner that is proper to him. George Campbell, in two of his Malaga paintings, seems to extract the last secrets of pattern from scenes which in weaker hands would cloy ; and Daniel O'Neill's *Mountain Top Glenveagh* is as sombrely evocative as his *Saskia* is sumptuous. This painter does not, like Mr. Campbell, advance from strength to strength—neither formal problems nor psychological subtleties seem to tempt him ; but in the sheer sensuous feeling for paint he has no equal among us. How inimitable he is may be seen from the work of Mr. Kenneth Webb, two of whose pictures here are rich and full-bodied enough, but, in comparison with Mr. O'Neill's, just lack the touch that would make the chords vibrate.

Nano Reid is something of a puzzle. Her earlier work was decorative, well-organised, never trying to say too much ; but her canvases become more and more swirling, her colour too often drab and opaque. She seems to be attempting to bring ever larger spaces within her patterns, where they refuse to fit, as if her beloved Boyne-Valley was viewed from a dizzily rising aeroplane. More than any Irish artist perhaps, except Mr. Collins, she has a personal vision to express ; but one sometimes wishes she would be content with her more delicate, feminine, way of expressing it.

Another painter whose surface slightly repels is Patrick Hickey, an interesting newcomer—whose pictures however, are not, like Nano Reid's, genuine attempt to interpret the Irish scene ; they might have been painted almost anywhere. Mr. Hickey has the nice placing and fastidious sense of design of Mr. Le Brocquy (without the latter's bizarrerie) ; but his colour is coarsely applied, and the sun in one picture too much resembles a sale-tab, so that his work appears to more advantage in photographs.

Louis Le Brocquy seems to have found his truest medium in tapestries, one of which is shown here ; and we are glad to note that Patrick Pye is bringing his intensity of colour and sense of the "numinous" to stained glass. Mr. Pye, if he were a more careful draughtsman, would be a grand worker in all his media (one of the faces, in his window *The Nativity*, is unfortunately somewhat scabbled) ; *The Mocking of Christ* has the richness and decorative grouping of a lacquered panel, by some 17th Century Jesuit-painter in China. Another artist who warms this Summer of our discontent is Doreen Vanston, who has the opulence of Matthew Smith together with the abstract use of colour of the Blau Reiter school. Her picture of the flautist has a rare sense of abandon and joy ; but in *Study of Flowers* she fails, like (over-often) Mr. Pye, by a simple lack of taking trouble. There is also fine colour in Mr. Ross Williamson's sulphurous vision of Avoca Copperworks, and in the tiny jewelled water-colours of Dermot Goulding.

In a more severe and restrained convention, Anne Yeats is delightful in *Cage and Bird*, and *The Chair*—though somewhat insubstantial, and lacking altogether those "tactile values" of which Mr. Hennessy is such a master—remains a part of one's mind's furniture. Leslie MacWeeney's *Cow*, *The Boy David* and *Girl* have a tenderness achieved by simplicity and austerity ; Miss MacWeeney is a careful technician, with a surrealist sense of the Symbol. Indeed this Exhibition is interesting for the number of good woman-painters. Anne Madden (a new name to me) has two good pictures, and the blues and greens of Margaret Irwin's *Girl in Sweater* are delicious ; Eileen Costelloe has something of the cool refinement of the early Frances Kelly ; and there is a picture by Olive Henry showing her

usual bold outline and feeling for balanced composition. On the other hand, Caroline Scally and Barbara Warren—painters of usually uniform excellence—are unequal this year. In Miss Scally's picture of Clonmacnoise she drops into archaeological lumpiness—which is redeemed, however, by the perky sea-gulls of *Old Mills Galway*, a most satisfying picture; and in Miss Warren's *Empty Gable Ends* she has not, with her usual success, resolved her linear pattern. Norah McGuinness's canvasses are, I protest, too crowded, and her colour is apt to be discordant, as in the flowers of *Wet Afternoon*; but the child and the window behind it in the same picture compose a truly magical detail.

Gerard Dillon seems to be a poet in search of a pictorial language, and who has not found it yet; with more plastic feeling he might become, like Daniel O'Neill, a true poet in paint. He has, however, moved away from his too fluent, attractive, story-book manner; in *The Old Woman*, he tackles a serious problem, though it is still too deliberate and self-conscious. Again in *The White Rocks* he nearly succeeds, but seems unable to decide between an abstract and a naturalistic treatment; the rocks give one the uncomfortable impression that they are turning into fish. Patrick Swift continues adding leaf to leaf, with ever more studied objectivity and meticulousness enough to satisfy Ruskin. And since I have started to be cross, I can see little to be said for Fr. Jack Hanlon's mixed confectionery; and Philip Castle's *Between the Bridges* is an example of the *faux-naïf*, wearisomely extended.

There was much that was good in the Sculpture Section, though I was chiefly impressed with Oisín Kelly's wonderful *Child*. In its subtle modulation of planes, and grasp of the subject as a plastic whole, this is more than experiment—it is discovery. In comparison, his *St. Michael and Dragon* seems little more than high spirits; and Hilary Heron's *Crazy Jane in Steel* is over-laboured literary fantasy. Werner Schurman and Gerda Fromel are both delightful in their statuettes, which bring back the heroic age as if they were fresh from Sumerian tombs.

Marian Jeffares, whose pictures of China were shown at the Ritchie Hendriks Gallery, has given us a veritable banquet of colour and vivacity. Her strong glazed colours produce a porcelain effect, well suited to these scenes of the Celestial Republic, combined with a taut wiry line. Just occasionally the result is harsh; the blue blouse in *Worker and Peasant* is too much like a patch of distempered wall, and the frequent juxtaposition of orange and fiery pink is a little garish. For this reason a picture such as *Weeding Rice*, with its carefully gradated yellows, shows Mrs. Jeffares at her best. Her figures, curved and rounded over their occupations with intent unstudied expressions, are extremely well rendered; only some details—particularly necks, hands and forearms—are too ruthlessly sacrificed to her elliptical decorative effects. The shadow of the Ploughman in *Husking Maize* looks rather like a body lying prone—which is the more startling as the other figures throw no discoverable shadows. Distance, in fact, seems lacking in these pictures—though this may be an illusion of the Chinese landscape; the background fringes of mountains often seem cut out of cardboard. This, indeed, does not worry us in the sharp economical statement of *Chinese Village*, where for once Mrs. Jeffares lets the imagination roam. This picture with its soft colours and perfect balance, was one of the most satisfying in the room—unfortunately hung to very ill advantage; the delicately-suggested sunflowers

in the foreground seemed literally to be whispering their secrets. One would like to see examples of this freedom of handling among Mrs. Jeffares' drawings, which, though extremely competent, smack a little of the art-school; though her sense of character, subtly differentiated, never fails her, and many of these little portraits of humorous, toiling, humanity remain in the memory.

## EDWARD SHEEHY

### AN APPRECIATION

**T**HOUGH obituaries are in their nature melancholy scriptures, tributes to the dead can easily become patronising pats from the necrologer who, from the hedonistic height of living, sums up the achievements of the man he mourns. No one can say of Edward Sheehy that he did not live in the fullest sense of the word, and with this knowledge no one could be aware that he himself was alive without acknowledging the fulness of Edward's all too brief span.

He had not reached his forty-seventh year when he died, and it may well be that an exuberant physical activity was responsible for his untimely end. The eponymous Balbus of the Latin grammars built a wall, but in Enniskerry where for his sustenance Edward wrote text-books and marked examination papers, he also literally with his own hands, built a house.

Of Kerry origin and with a Mastership in Arts conferred on him by University College, Cork, he settled down in Dublin and was soon one of the moving spirits of *Ireland To Day*, a monthly that endeavoured to carry on the liberal tradition of the *Irish Statesman*. He took up painting and, as in the case of George Moore, laid the foundation for his ultimate success as an art critic. His Art Notes in this Magazine began in 1944 and with them he raised the standard of art criticism in this country. Rarely do we find sensitive reactions to works of art expressed with such *sensibilité*, such economy of *clichés* and, on the positive side, with such creative comment.

Edward Sheehy was the finest of our art critics and his architectural style without any "literary" ornament will long

be a model for critics aiming at a "pure" assessment. Few will equal his keen eye and appreciation of paint, of form or the lack of it, of academic skill or surrealist fantasy. His work on art subjects may also be found in the now defunct *Envoy* where he occasionally used a pseudonym which proved no mask for his unmistakable style and when he contributed art commentaries to the glossy social magazines he refused to lower his standards.

He was poet too, though one must look for his verse in the periodicals. He loved the countryside and was an enthusiastic gardener. In "Portrait", a poem which appeared in this Magazine (April, 1942), a woman's face is

young like aconite

Flowering in the flaw of January.

For proof of his ability as a short story writer one has only to read again his *God Send Sunday*, one of the Tower Press Booklets where delineation of character is matched by superb technique, and the atmosphere of a South of Ireland small town is brilliantly evoked. A publisher might, with profit for himself and the public, collect the several stories by Edward Sheehy which are to be found in the magazines already mentioned and in *Horizon*. There remain two unpublished novels, one of which is in the hands of an American agent.

Above all an individualist, Edward Sheehy never compromised. He might have been a teacher at a University had he been able to subscribe to formal authority. His wide culture, however, lent authority to his always stimulating conversation. A proud man, he never used his knowledge of Irish to open official gates, but did not hesitate to look for inspiration in the Gaelic past when the subject appealed to him. There is still extant his libretto for an opera on the theme of *Suibhne Gelt*.

In a poem called "Fragment" he wrote :

They need not grief, who find  
Their dying worth the dream.

We do not know the full intensity of that dream that was his life, but will find consolation in his work, grieving that he was not spared to add to it.

A. J. L.



## BOOK REVIEWS

FORM AND MEANING IN DRAMA. By H. D. F. Kitto. Methuen. 30s.

GREEK THEATRE PRODUCTION. By T. B. L. Webster. Methuen. 25s.

THE ART OF GREEK COMEDY. By Katherine Lever. Methuen. 21s.

Professor Kitto has written a most important book, basing it on the principle of criticism that in any great work of art "the connexion between the form and the content is so vital that the two may be said to be ultimately identical". His analysis of six Greek tragedies—the Orestes trilogy, *Ajax*, *Antigone* and *Philoctetes*—and *Hamlet*, and consideration of Greek and Elizabethan dramatic forms and Religious drama generally, brilliantly justify his claim that "it is quite meaningless to consider one of them without constant reference to the other." Yet so familiar is the sort of criticism that is indulgent to the seeming naïveté in Aeschylus, tidies up the illogicalities in Sophocles, makes of *Hamlet* a chameleon figure taking colour and shape from each interpreter, or with convolutions and conclusions to focus attention on their begetter, that there is an agreeable novelty in Professor Kitto's presumption that we are here facing dramatists great enough to be "in complete command of their own art and (with) very good reasons for shaping their plays as they did".

He proposed with deceptive mildness that every interpretation of these plays be submitted to this test: does it imply that the dramatist is an imperfect designer whose weaknesses must be condoned or decently covered up with tactful reference to the limitations, for example, of his period, audience, technique or available resources. If so, the critic—one would like to think before rushing into print—might with advantage rigorously question his own competence and, after this chastening experience, remind himself of something else.

"If you will trust the dramatist, if you will consider the form of his play, patiently and with some imagination, as being probably the best possible expression of what he meant, then you will be giving yourself the best chance of appreciating what impact he was hoping to make on the audience for which he was writing. What knowledge we may acquire, extraneously, about the mental habits of the dramatist's own period will, of course, help—provided that we keep it in its place: the *Antigone*, after all, was written by Sophocles, not by the Periclean Age, and *Hamlet* not by the Elizabethan Age, but by Shakespeare."

Or again,

"Our concern, as critics, is with individual works of art, each a unique creation; and if the work is first-rate, all its parts and details will have been designed to embody one unique conception. The details of structure, style and treatment are not things already explained on historical grounds; on the contrary, they are the evidence which must guide us to our interpretation of the play. If we find Aeschylus 'stiff' in comparison with Sophocles, the reason is not that he was an earlier dramatist and had not quite mastered all the niceties of dramatic form; but that he, being at least as consummate a master of dramatic form as ever Sophocles was, had different things to say—which he would have said less well had he been silly enough to make use of the Sophoclean 'improvements'."

It would be unfair to the finely elaborate argument to wrench any part from its context for inspection. One can say, however, that Aeschylus and Sophocles no longer appear as the victims of a traditional dramatic apparatus, but as having "invented and moulded this form because it enabled them to do exactly what they wanted to do : not to represent life in all its dynamic variety, but to present their conception of the principles or forces that operate in life". As for the Shakespearian conception, it is

"like that of a tapestry or large landscape-painting, in which the minor characters lead the eye gradually from the central figures to the distant horizon ; or like many of Dürer's drawings, in which the central figure seems to be jostled and hemmed in on every side by the abounding life of nature and humanity, not lightly sketched in, as a mere background, but drawn vividly and with complete conviction, as if to suggest the totality of things, of which the central incident is a part, and from which it derives its truth and its significance."

Whether Professor Kitto is observing tone, gesture or visual effect, amplifying his suggestion that "the essential difference between the Greek and Elizabethan drama may be expressed in the formula Concentration, not Extension", or treating *Hamlet* as religious drama because that seems to him the implication of its vast architectonic pattern, the sensitivity and richness of his interpretation cannot be too highly praised.

In *Greek Theatre Production* Professor Webster has made a lucid and authoritative pattern of the considerable, but scattered and sometimes 'treacherous' material : plays and ancient writings on the drama ; the remains of theatres ; statues, statuettes, masks, paintings, mosaics. His regional arrangement—Athens, Sicily and Italy, Mainland Greece, the Islands, Asia and Africa— and reference to local variations, and tracing of cross-connections illuminate the argument that Hellenistic drama was international ; while the detailed examination of scenery, staging, costume and masks reveals what the dramatist could command. A chapter sketching the history of the Greek stage and a number of fine plates complete a book that will be invaluable to the classical student. If only the scholar and historian can adequately appreciate Professor Webster's labours, able treatment and catalogue of monuments, the modest lover of the theatre will be greatly helped to visualize performances of Tragedy and of Comedy, Old and New.

Miss Lever's study is designed for the reader without Greek. It traces the development of Greek comedy, and analyses in particular and thoroughly the art of Aristophanes and of Menander. So far as the limits of her book allow, she has, by a balanced synthesis of other works, provided the necessary context : "political, economic, and social conditions, current ideas of religion, philosophy, and education, concomitant state of the arts of music, dance, art, theatrical architecture, non-dramatic poetry, and tragedy". *The Art of Greek Comedy* is, therefore, a sound guide, and comprehensive survey of the subject. Miss Lever's scholarship does not allow any over-simplification of the many problems ; but she communicates fully her delight, and invites the student who has restricted himself to modern literature to acknowledge the undimmed vitality of the ancient world.

L. H.

THE SELF AND THE DRAMAS OF HISTORY. By Reinhold Niebuhr. Faber and Faber. 21s.

This is a wide-ranging, compelling, disturbing yet encouraging book, which, in its relevance to the problems of collective destiny in the contemporary world, should be made compulsory reading for all those who help to shape the destiny of nations. Even if they cannot accept its conclusions, they will be forced to re-examine their own pre-suppositions . . . Its closely reasoned argument cannot fail to enlighten any one who wishes to be clear about the true nature of the self, its place and purpose in the community.

Modern culture finds it impossible to conceive of a frame of meaning which will do justice to both the private and collective drama in which human beings are involved, because it tries to comprehend them both in terms of rational intelligibility. Niebuhr sets out to expose all systematisers, scientific or philosophic, who try to explain life within a closed rational system. What Kierkegaard started, he brings up to date in this age of profound discoveries and mastery over nature. The book is divided into three parts. In Part I, Niebuhr analyses wherein the uniqueness of the self lies. There are directly experienced realities in the realm of selfhood which point beyond any system of rational intelligibility to mystery, and they create a sense of meaning and mystery in which the one penetrates the other. He shows that while history enlarges the scope of the collective drama, it does not obviate any of the problems of the single self in its involvement in and transcendence over its collective self. The grandeur and misery of self derive from its ability to transcend the temporal flux, to touch the fringes of the eternal.

The tendency throughout history to identify self with mind is as persistent as it is erroneous. Niebuhr shows how the attempt to interpret life in purely individualistic or purely collectivist term derives from the contradictory consequences of technical advance upon the community—which on the one hand extends social cohesion more and more, and at the same time emancipates the individual from the close embrace of a small organic community. He examines the tensions and contradictory theories that have arisen throughout history when one of these roles has been emphasised to the neglect of the others. There is no logic in history. It is a realm of contingency ; its essence remains a drama.

The self in its search for ultimate meaning has expressed itself in three categories, i). In the idolatrous religions, of ancient history, where the finite self is subordinated to something greater than it—but not so great that the self may not participate in the exaltation of the finite. 2. The perennial philosophy as defined by Aldous Huxley, i.e., mysticism, where the self transcends all particular existence. This embraces all thought stemming from Plotinus, and nearly all religions of the Orient. 3. The Biblical faiths of Judaism and Christianity where the self's experience with the ultimate is a dialogue between the self and a personal God.

The Biblical presupposition is the only one which asserts a *discontinuity* between the self and God—which makes explicit faith indispensable. Only this thesis is relevant to the partial and fragmentary meaning of history, and Niebuhr sets out to show in Part II why an allegedly dogmatic faith is justified by the experiences of the human self, more than is the rational approach to the self, in the history of Western civilization.



Alternative methods of explaining the mystery which surrounds us, lead to observable miscalculations with regard to the nature of man and of history. Niebuhr examines these alternative methods with an unerring eye for detecting a fallacy or an unacknowledged pre-supposition.

In Part III he maintains that faith is not the remains of mans earlier impotence (Marx), or the projection of infantile fantasies (Freud). Christianity can be said to have failed only where the canons of rationality have been used to justify or refute the truths of revelation. He distinguishes between pre-scientific and permanent myths—the latter being those which describe some meaning or reality not subject to exact analysis, but which can nevertheless be verified by experience. The Church itself, whether Catholic or Protestant, does not escape his censure.

Community, Government, Hierarchy, Authority, Property are all necessary, yet fruitful of injustice. They are the instruments of justice and order, but recognising the moral ambiguities of these instruments is relevant to the discovery why the Kingdom of God is relevant to every historic situation.

Niebuhr points out the danger of programmes which would integrate world community purely by artefact and conscious contrivance, and stresses the very limited competence man has in deflecting the drama of history. Two hazards may prevent the implicit untruths of Communist dogma from bringing about its own disintegration. I. Non-technical Asia still cherishes the illusions from which it took Western civilisation generations to be emancipated. II. America has dubious endowments for the leadership historical events have thrust on it. Her technical competence leaves her unconscious of the organic nature of other communal adherences, which are not simple contrivances of the human will.

Niebuhr points to appropriation of the Biblical faith as the only alternative to global destruction through atomic conflict ; a faith where, by recognition of the fragmentary and inconclusive nature of the drama of history, we will enter on a period of development in which no neat idea will be achieved, but where that which the forces of life and togetherness establish would be perfected and expressed, as always, by constitutional contrivance. The antinomies of history will express themselves to the end.

A new possibility of creating, without the threat of disaster, arises when human creativity is content to operate within its recognised fragmentariness. The only thing that makes sense out of the mystery of the human drama is the life, death and resurrection of Christ. It must be accepted by faith, when it will give a "peace of God, which passeth all *understanding*." No analysis, however, of the inadequacy of alternatives can persuade a man into this adventure of faith—not even prudence can do that. It requires a commitment of the self rather than a conclusion of its mind ; a commitment not possible without the pre-requisite of repentance.

Unfortunately, how to get man to that state of repentance, is not touched on by Niebuhr.

One lays down this book, trusting, that in a world geared to the production of more and more scientists, provision will always be made for the emergence of corrective thinkers of the calibre of Reinhold Niebuhr.

CHARLOTTE MCCLENAGHAN.



GEORGE BORROW. By René Fréchet. Didier, Paris.

Professor René Fréchet has written a most enthralling book on George Borrow and his writings. The first part is biographical. No fact or inference seems to have escaped his attention: family life and circumstances, Borrow's friends and critics, every journey and activity, the historical background, all that encouraged the romantic enthusiasms, the ardent linguistic studies, or thwarted and finally embittered the man have been closely and alertly investigated. The material is so abundant that a less sensitive biographer might well have blurred the fainter influences and prejudices and the conventional episodes to concentrate on the remarkable temperamental paradoxes, the picturesque traits and encounters; but Professor Fréchet would have the reader see and understand the man in his entirety.

There was something of Baron Corvo in Borrow, in his attitude and compensations, in his passionate refusal to exchange his world for reality, in the impression he made.

'Les dirigeants de la Société Biblique se sentaient comme pris de vertige devant Borrow.'

"Le 4 mai, tandis que, de la galerie de cet hôtel, il considérait en silence la pluie qui tombait à torrents dans le patio, un autre voyageur l'observait avec curiosité, notait sa haute taille, sa fière mine, son teint clair, ses yeux noirs et brillants, ses cheveux presque blancs. C'était le Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Elers Napier, fils adoptif du célèbre amiral Sir Charles Napier . . . Se décidant enfin à aborder Borrow, il lui adressa la parole en français, et reçut aussitôt une réponse en français qui lui parut prononcée avec l'accent parisien le plus pur. La conversation s'engage. Au bout d'un instant, l'officier, pris d'un doute, se met à parler en anglais; la réplique lui vient en anglais; il passe à l'italien; réponse en italien. A ce moment, paraît Antonio Buchino, Borrow interrompt la conversation pour lui donner un ordre en grec, puis salue en castillan l'hôtelier qui passe devant eux. Un voyageur autrichien descend; Borrow lui adresse la parole en allemand. Puis il se tourne de nouveau vers Napier. Celui-ci se met à parler des Gitanes du faubourg de Triana; Borrow aussitôt de disserter savamment sur les Gitanes, dont la langue, affirme-t-il, trahit l'origine indienne. Heureux de se trouver sur un terrain qui lui est familier, Napier place quelques mots d'hindoustani; cette fois, Borrow fait un petit geste de surprise; mais, se ressaisissant immédiatement, il se met à discuter des affaires d'Orient avec assurance."

It was the sort of situation in which a Borrow, a Corvo, was exquisitely affable, and it is not the comedy alone which makes one wish that such perfect moments could have been indefinitely prolonged. Professor Fréchet, too, lingers over Borrow at his most engaging. There is, for example that delightful description of one stage of the Spanish travels: "Le Secrétaire d'ambassade parti, Borrow se fit amener son bel andalou, lesté d'une cargaison de Nouveaux Testaments, sauta en selle, et sortit fièrement de Madrid. suivi de son écuyer grec, qui montait lui-même l'ancien cheval du contrebandier de Cordoue. Ce nouveau Don Quichotte ne parlait pas à l'aveuglette . . ." Yet the eccentricity and contradictions, lovingly portrayed, do not caricature a singular man.

"Dira-t-on qu'il était fait pour vivre en d'autres temps? L'esprit du siècle, nous l'avons vu, lui était contraire, et presque également contraire aux deux tendances opposées de sa nature . . . Cependant on peut douter qu'aucune époque eût pu le rendre heureux. Le vent, la nature, les hommes, l'effrayaient autant qu'ils le charmaient, et sa vie était un perpétuel mouvement entre la lande et la maison, entre les Gypsies et la famille, entre un calvinisme paré à l'anglicane et le panthéisme du grand air. Il refusait de devenir un Gypsy, comme il refusait de suivre les modes de son temps. Il avait choisi d'être un homme à part, un 'lavengro' et 'rai romani' . . ."

The second part of the book considers Borrow's many translations, but it is chiefly a detailed examination of his original works, their virtues and defects, intention and achievement, the quality of his thought and art. The adverse criticism of some of Borrow's contemporaries is, on one sense, more relevant to-day when the slow-savoured pleasure, the unpruned page and deliberate disengagement from the present and its urgencies receive at best impatient notice. Professor Fréchet, however, has been concerned to follow each awkward gesture to its source, to understand the vast nostalgia, to discover the significance for Borrow of a gypsy encampment, the forbidden China, old sagas, and what he created out of his restless travels.

*George Borrow* is notable as a biography, and study of "une oeuvre unique, incomplète, mais riche de suggestions, alliant une lourdeur désespérée à une exaltation religieuse, un naturalisme picaresque classiquement ordonné à un romantisme du mystère et de la sensation; une oeuvre toujours vibrante et dynamique pourtant."

L. H.

14 MONOGRAPHS ON MODERN BELGIAN ARTISTS. Published by the Belgian Ministry of Public Education.

OUT OF BEDLAM: 27 Wood-Engravings. By Elizabeth Rivers. The Dolmen Press. 31s. 6d.

AQUA VITAE. The Dolmen Press. Wrappers, 1s.; boards, 3s. 6d.

There has been no concerted art movement for over thirty years, and a second generation of artists has carefully ploughed and reploughed the earth first turned by the giants of the first two decades of this century. How remote they seem now—Matisse, Dufy, the early Picasso, the early Chirico; the pioneers of abstraction, Gris, Tatlin, Pevsner—and from the Germanic world, Kandinsky and Klee. It is almost like the beginning of another Quattrocento; certainly it was the beginning of a new era in art, in which artists, though often but indirectly in touch with the more permanent realities, followed the turning circle of their development until they often circumscribed in microcosm a complex of their environment brought to order.

Each of the Belgians dealt with in these admirable little books shows his heredity fairly clearly—they are good sons and repeat the qualities of their fathers. Occasionally, within these limits, they show an individuality, a variation in accent, in manner, almost in character, which is interesting, and in the case of one or two, probably important. The bag includes six abstractionists—Bertrand, Marstboom, Luc Piere, Anne Bonnet, Delahaut, Jean Milo; two widely different

sculptors—Cantre and Anthoons; and a mixed lot who are recognizably representational, varying from undistorted reconstructions of reality to the contortions and agonies of expressionism—Wilvens, Thevenet, Floris Jespers, Lemmen, Marie Howet, Louis Buisseret. They are nearly all sophisticated, in the contemporary manner, at the centre of fashion. Looking at this variety and vitality one realizes how much the dividing sea separates us, for here in a country much smaller than our own is exceedingly competent painting related to modern problems. In Ireland the battles which Manie Jellet began twenty years ago are still being fought.

I have not heard of most of these artists before—each country nowadays has art movements of limited importance growing like the predicable and ordered fields of tulips one sees in Holland. Even in unlikely places one can turn the stone to reveal the most industrious activity beneath. So the only Belgian names which really mean something to me do not appear in this selection of booklets from an extensive series—the giants Ensor and Permeke, that sizeable colourist Jean-Jacques Galliard, and painters Rik Wouters and Felicien Rops—none of these are represented in the monographs under review.

The extraordinary vitality of a second generation of abstractionists, both in Europe and in America, is one of the artistic and social phenomena of our times; and the proximity of these Belgian artists to the main currents of European art gives them an authority, and allows them a freedom and variety of expression which is unknown in abstract art here. Their work varies from the precise ovoids and parabolic shapes of Delahaut, to the complicated abstract expressionism of Marstboom, who paints spaced and coloured light through a thicket of dark hatchings, given a circular rhythm deriving from a former phase of Orphic Cubism. The classical source of Mondrian is exemplified in the laminated translucent abstracts of Bertrand, whose pictures give the impression of crystals seen through the reflected light of a microscope. Luc Piere's abstracts are directly traceable to a recognizable reality—they are ultimate stylisations of the human figure beyond Leger, and Roberts' modification of Leger, to bottle-like cylindrical shapes which stand delicately on their attenuated bases to produce a reality strangely ordered, strangely dream-like, psychologically significant in an oblique glancing way.

The realists and expressionists rather disappoint after the tense visual aestheticism of the abstracts. Buisseret paints a gently erotic, neo-classic world of women with debts to Renoir, to Augustus John, to Puvis de Chavannes, and oddly enough—to Andrea del Castagno. Wolvens develops phases of impressionism in the unpretentious scene—a deserted railway, a surf-breaker half-submerged, some deck-chairs against a beach—somewhat reminiscent in mood of parts of the French film "M. Hulot's Holiday". This is quiet yet inventive painting, achieving the effect of importance by turning its back on the subject, as it were, and not forcing it on the eye. His pictures open themselves slowly, meditatively, and gradually find their own equilibrium with the mind.

Influences succeed each other with baffling rapidity in the work of Marie Howet—Cezanne, Rousseau, Dufy, Matisse, yet she retains something of her own; admittedly a follower, but an intelligent one. With Thevenet it is again the drama of the unpretentious moment slowly ascending to significance in the mind's eye—the quiet figureless interiors, the old chest-of-drawers, the cloth

billowing slightly as it drops over a table's edge in the corner of some Victorian room. An intimate Dutch sort of art, playing its minor variation on what has gone before, the countless interiors of the seventeenth century.

With Floris Jaspers one approaches the strength, the distortion, the agonies of modern expressionism. He ends with a highly personal style, in which the decorative pattern eventually reinforces the emotional content, and thus neatly solves the expressionist's main problem.

The two sculptors are widely different. Cantre is intensely humanist, in the great tradition, echoing Donatello again and again. There is the same suaveity of line whose rhythm brings to unity and order even the most awkward poet. With Anthoons we enter again the hermetic abstract world in which pure form, devoid of all psychological considerations, functions merely as substance, as a revelation of material, an expression of intuitions of dimly sensed cosmic laws. Anthoons is at the moment heavily influenced by Henry Moore.

These monographs give some idea of the vitality of modern Belgian art—its diversity, its energy, its industry. Each has fourteen pages of French text with twenty-four monochrome reproductions and a frontispiece in colour.

Elizabeth Rivers' wood-engravings illustrate texts taken from Christopher Smart's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, and although they have many excellences they do not impress as did some of her former work—notably the engravings of life in the Aran Islands. Mysticism is always pictorially dangerous—even Blake is not always successful—and most of these engravings lack the inspiration necessary to fuse the concept in the text with the spirit of the illustration. The second, third and twenty sixth engravings are the best things in the book—the last of these, illustrating "For he hath turned the shadow of death into the morning" is particularly impressive—a rhythmic concentric composition which knits its components together into the unity of a tensed muscle. As always with the Dolmen Press, the book is beautifully designed and printed, with a plentitude of space unusual in these days of conscious economy.

The Dolmen Press has reprinted Richard Stanihurst's comments on our *Aqua Vitae* in a little booklet which is a jewel. Its versatility of action on the human organism when "moderatlie taken" is encyclopoedaic. Among its favours "... it cutteth phlegm, it abandoneth melancholie, it relisheth the heart" and, more preactially "it cureth the hydropsie, it healeth the strangurie, it pounceth the stone, it expelleth grauell, it puffeth away all ventisitie" "... And" says Stanihurst in conclusion "trulie it is a sovereigne liquor, if it be orderly taken". It seems that he, too, found the qualification necessary.

BRIAN O'DOHERTY.

THE HARVEST OF TRAGEDY. By T. R. Henn. Methuen. 25s.

The Arden Shakespeare. KING RICHARD II. Edited by Peter Ure. Methuen. 18s.

Mr. Henn's analysis of dramatic tragedy has much in common with Mr. Eric Newton's investigation of the meaning of beauty in a recent book. To suggest the different levels of his subject and its structure, Mr. Newton took the onion for analogy: the visible skin, the layer after layer peeled off till "a hard core



is discovered, a core that has something to do with the mysteries of the human soul". Mr. Henn takes as his starting point Aristotle's *Poetics*, and immediately indicates the layers: the influence of current ideologies on tragedy; whether rhetoric is for us a device or still an essential vehicle for the expression of tragic emotions; the status modern psychology and anthropology accord to Greek and Elizabethan psychological theories, and what new illumination they themselves throw on the stage; the response the dramatist to-day demands from his audience and the cultural background he may assume; the moral forces, if any, that have retained their former potency; and what recovery is possible of tragedy's traditional functions and values.

Against the historical attitudes to these problems that have relevance for present criticism, Mr. Henn places his examination of the structure of tragedy, beginning with the development of the plot with its revelation of "the effect and pressure of the past upon the present and future", the establishment of the dynamic relationship of the characters, and the rhythm of their conflict. In this connexion he makes interesting use of the image of the net, both seine and trammel, to show some qualities of the structure. *Katharsis*, which has been so variously interpreted, is here discussed in part as "a somewhat complicated formulation and discharge of psychological pressures"; and the elements generally acknowledged in our awareness of the "shadow of the pleasure"—a recognition of our own experience, or new light on it; acceptance of the "sacrificial" principle at work in the world; and those traces of sadistic or masochistic satisfaction and the destructive urge that contemporary psychology, if it has not made respectable, will not allow us to forget—are illustrated.

The whole moral consciousness in relation to tragedy brings in the philosophical stress on Will as the mainspring of tragedy, but Mr. Henn also includes an image of Anouilh's implying "that there is in the universe this coiled-spring tension, ready at any moment to release its destructive-tragic forces, regardless of the kind or quality of the force that touches the trigger to release the detaining sear", and Giraudoux's thesis that nations *meurent d'imperceptibles impolitesses*. However released evil and suffering may be, the problem of their existence has had innumerable answers, here listed under the classic headings of determinism, earthly illusion, dualism, a purposeless and chaotic world; those offered by Marxism, Freudianism, "moral realism", Hegelianism, or some combination of them; and the Christian solution. Mr. Henn, who acknowledges his indebtedness to Reinhold Niebuhr for the framework of his own speculations, quotes from the latter's *Nature and Destiny of Man*:

"The temptation to sin lies . . . in the human situation itself. This situation is that man as spirit transcends the natural and temporal process in which he is involved and also transcends himself. Thus his freedom is the basis of his creativity but it is also his temptation".

Theology is in fact always present in Mr. Henn's thought, and notably so in his consideration of Death in Tragedy.

Other major influences for him have been the work of Jung and Kerenyi, the ideas of Yeats, Miss Bodkin's *Archetypal Patterns and Studies in Type-Images*; and his chapters on the impact of tragedy, mainly unconscious, upon activities of the mind admirably illustrate his deep knowledge of their labours. His detailed studies range widely, for he has drawn on the Greek dramatists, and Shakespeare,

on Racine, Ibsen, Shaw, Synge, Yeats and O'Casey, on Lorca, Eliot, Sartre, Cocteau, Camus and Anouilh.

These aspects, and more, for this is an astonishingly comprehensive book profoundly aware of the complex nature of its subject, are brought into a synthesis based on the Christian tradition. Mr. Henn asserts that, trite though the phrase may sound, yet "The Harvest of Tragedy is the freedom and enrichment of the human spirit". Dealing with ultimates, tragedy allows of direct or oblique exposition, and if its imitation of life forbids definite answers, it may not evade the rigorous recognition of moral issues.

"Its peculiar quality is to present the mingled yarn in such a manner that a pattern is perceptible. If that perception is accompanied by exaltation or ecstasy, by a heightening of the sense, by a transcending of the physical impact of suffering, grief, destruction, we are enabled to recognize and to possess, at least momentarily, values that we have grounds for believing to be permanent in their own right . . . If the Christian point of view is accepted (and I have endeavoured to keep in sight what seems to me a steady convergence of the moral and anthropological sciences upon it) I am clear that the history and theory of tragedy is capable of re-interpretation in those terms; and that it affords a more adequate solution of the tragic problems than can be found elsewhere."

In his discussion of Shakespeare's Historical plays, Mr. Henn stresses in *Richard II* the "inextricable confusion between the emotion, the word, the act . . . the word has taken charge of the intelligence . . . (for) the need to unpack the heart causes the character to oscillate dangerously on the pivot of 'brave and glorious words' ". Mr. Peter Ure, in the introductory essay to his notable editing of the play for the very distinguished new Arden Shakespeare, would seem to insist on the contrary view: "Richard's fall is due to a specific deed, a rash act which he was warned to avoid and which springs not from a corrupt fancy but from a failure in duty and the understanding of his function. The poetry which he speaks thereafter is Shakespeare's medium, which he uses to show—and by means of images to show as lustroously as possible—what is going on in Richard's mind and heart." In the two readings, however, explicitly in Mr. Henn's, implicitly in Mr. Ure's, and through his detailed and masterly tracing of the pattern of the play, the contrast between Bolingbroke and Richard, his perception of "this personal accent and hypertension of grief (which) result from Shakespeare's attempt to give us a man who is really suffering", the 'shadow of Hamlet' is present.

MAGIC IN THE WEB. Action and Language in 'Othello'. By Robert B. Heilman. University of Kentucky Press. \$5.

From a wide acquaintance with Shakespearean studies in general, and detailed examination of the play itself and the major contributions to *Othello* criticism, Professor Heilman has with great dexterity and assurance spun—if one may so record a first impression of his large work—his own web to entrap nuance, allusion and gesture, to invite every exegetical wing, and to trace the complex pattern of the play.

His scrupulous analysis of the parts—Iago's 'techniques of infiltration' and 'manipulation of appearances', the cracks in Othello's self-confidence, the different versions of love, Desdemona's choice of wifely obedience and Emilia's of disobedience, both leading to death, the dark-light theme—refers constantly to their intricate, creative relationship. The study of the whole notes the interaction in the mode of 'pure' drama, and the characters' poetic language which "vastly complicates their communication with each other and with us".

"For working criticism, the broad categories of the parts whose relatedness is to be observed are two: plot and poetry. We might again find our metaphor in Iago's words and speak of the wit and witchcraft of the dramatist: the conscious designing and articulating: and the mysterious endowing of many parts—especially the poetic language—with dramatic value and meaning far in excess of the minimal logical requirements of the occasion: the magic in the web. This is less a theory of composition than an effort to suggest different aspects of the play that are only theoretically separable."

While the student is gratefully underscoring for his essays such sub-titles as, 'Iago's grievance game', 'Iago the Economic Man', 'Dr. Iago and his Potions', 'Othello the judge-prosecutor-priest-executioner', the common reader may be somewhat shaken by Professor Hielman's virtuoso academic performance. He may even dare to wonder at the curious effect on some American critics of Shakespeare's lovely language.

"The design of the web depends also on the proper distinction of parts which would otherwise fall together into a mass in which the forming powers of the multiple linkages we are observing would be obscured, diminished, or rendered irrelevant. Design is a tension of separative and unifying powers: in this sense the negative (separative) is essential to the affirmative (unifying) and is a relational mode. We need to be aware of the separative modes which lie beyond the distinguishability of the characters and the discernible segmentation of the action in time."

Each character is amply treated, though only a few of his conclusions can be noted. "For Desdemona becomes, rather than simply is, the saint . . . Here is the perfecting of human nature, which I have called the miracle of personality; its fitting dramatic form is an apparent miracle in the physical world, a 'resurrection'. Hence one's sense of a surrealistic rightness in Desdemona's return from death, as it were, to say her last words. It is an expressionistic symbol of the metaphysical quality of her love. It is the victory of spirit: the experience of *agape* in a world distraught by *eros*." Was the 'moth of peace', skimming so lightly over reality, aware of the spiritual and intellectual range that terms like 'saint' and '*agape*' imply? The contours of Iago's world and his shape are more narrowly examined but captions rather than new crimes have been added to the existent dossier.

When Othello's ambiguities are analysed—those ambiguities that we sense at the moment his gaze is on the proud Venetian faces in the council chamber—

one begins to speculate with some irreverence on the sad fate of scholars had Shakespeare added Shavian prefaces to his plays. Professor Heilman writes :

" Othello is the least heroic of Shakespeare's tragic heroes . . . All passion spent, Othello obscures his vision by trying to keep his virtues in focus. The Moor, the warrior, the survivor of exotic adventures, the romantic historian of self, is oddly affiliated with the middle-class hero, and in his kind of awareness we detect a prevision of later domestic drama.

" It is these aspects of Othello's personality that are lost sight of when his ending is pictured as a rather glorious affair. His very defensiveness and sentiment and sense of loss and of good intention not quite explicably gone awry win an affection which a stern facing of spiritual reality might not. In Othello, the hero is—a rare thing—very close to Everyman in his latent capacity for violence and in all his ordinary self-protective devices. This is the underlying, though unidentified, reason why it is easy to ' feel with ' him."

Perhaps the cosiness lies in the interpreter. It is Shylock's face that is close to Othello's, and the singular contortion of both—the attrition and the frenzy—was prophetically etched : Everyman's mask has not been moulded by isolation.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND NATURAL SCIENCE. Some Questions on their Relations. The Bampton Lectures, 1956. By E. L. Mascall. Longmans. 25s.

THE STATUS OF MAN IN THE UNIVERSE. By Albert Van Eyken. Longmans. 7s. 6d.

Dr. Mascall, the eminent Anglican theologian, devoted the 1956 Bampton Lectures to a consideration of " the relation of the traditional faith to the contemporary scientific situation ", and in particular to some of the central questions on the relations between Christian theology and natural science.

The assumption that conflict is inevitable belongs to the days when science and theology both claimed finality ; but the most recent work in the former field no longer imposes on the theologian the duty of dogmatic exertions—indeed, defensiveness and denunciation are now often wasted on already abandoned theories—and, if he is alert to the implications of the present speculation of philosophers of science, he will discover that his belief in a contingent and orderly world can welcome scientific method.

" It (the world created by the God of Christian theism) will embody regularities and patterns, since its Creator is rational, but the particular regularities and patterns which it embodies cannot be predicted *a priori*, since he is free ; they can only be discovered by examination. The world of Christian theism will thus be one whose investigation requires the empirical method, that is to say the method of modern natural science, with its twin techniques of observation and experiment."

Dr. Mascall does not, of course, suggest that the Christian now appeal to science to justify his faith. Metaphysics and the Christian message are not in



themselves concerned with scientific arguments ; but every discovery about the nature of the universe is to be received with gratitude as further knowledge of the Creator's handiwork, and it is a matter of legitimate interest to study, for example, the current theory of physical indeterminism in the light of the classical Christian doctrine of " the relation between the primary causality of God and the secondary causality of his creatures ".

The many churchmen who still regard with uneasiness or panic the labours of the physiologist and psychologist might profitably adopt Dr. Mascall's more robust, and informed, attitude :

" Here I wish simply to emphasise that Christianity has not only always admitted that body and mind are intimately inter-connected but has very emphatically affirmed it. The fact that scientists have in recent years discovered previously unknown and unsuspected facts about the nature of that inter-relation is a matter not for dismay but for admiration and joy on the part of Christian theologians. There are not *theoretical* problems for Christian faith, for example, in the remarkable psychological effects of operations such as prefrontal leucotomy, lobotomy and hemispherectomy, in spite of the difficulty of the practical and ethical issues that they raise. For, if it is true, as the Catholic tradition has maintained, that grace does not destroy nature but perfects it, then the more man knows about his nature the better he will be equipped to utilise and co-operate with grace. As I have said before, in order to exercise our freedom it is essential for us to know what are the limits within which that freedom can be exercised ; the more we know about our natural selves the better, whether that knowledge be derived from what psychologists tell us about the unconscious mind or what neuro-physiologists tell us about the cerebral cortex. The only caveats are that we should not suppose that the findings of contemporary science are final or exhaustive and that we should not force the evidence in order to produce premature reconciliations and syntheses."

So lucid and masterly is this examination of scientific thought and the philosophical implications of, for example, Relativity and Quantum Theory that the layman may wonder if too much has not been taken for granted in the theological realm. The swift change from rigorous scrutiny of scientific theories to the larger and dialectic treatment of theological matters may a little bewilder the less agile laity.

" It is . . . well to recall that while, so far as we know, the first human sin marked the first rebellion against God that originated within the material world . . . it did not mark the first rebellion against God within the whole created order. Angels—pure spirits—had sinned before man ; and although man was perfectly free not to sin, his own sin was provoked by suggestions from the fallen spiritual realm."

The theologian's automatic access to the celestial archives is, alas, denied to the rest of us ; and we are still left to make our own discrimination of faith and credulity.

Mr. Van Eyken has undertaken, in *The Status of Man in the Universe*, with Johnsonian vigour and on behalf of Roman Catholics, to deal firmly with scientific man who is "frequently amazed that we do not slip through the fine mesh of matter". His attack on Darwin, Eddington and Jeans seems a little dated, however, when the general reader is quite aware that much of nineteenth-century evolutionary theory has been modified, and that the well-meaning over-simplifications of popularisers are regarded ruefully by scientists today. Again, it is surely rather glib to criticize Freud's philosophical position and his adoption of a "world-view which for him and many disciples has destroyed hope and a great deal of traditional wisdom" without some reference to the Europe of his time that scarcely encouraged optimism in the Jewish race.

Mr. Van Eyken's little book is most carefully and clearly written and his scholarship is manifest ; yet one wonders if his claims for Christian, and especially Roman Catholic, humility are quite without complacency. As Dr. Agnes Arber, the distinguished biologist, commented in her recent fine work *The Mind and the Eye* :

"After all, though every one of the innumerable schools of philosophic and scientific thought is engaged in seeking the truth, the riddle of the universe remains unsolved : and so long as this is so, it ill beseems any one group of thinkers to dictate *de haut en bas* to the rest."

JESTING APOSTLE. *The Life of Bernard Shaw*. By Stephen Winsten. London : Hutchinson. 21s. net.

In this year of the centenary of Bernard Shaw, many books have been written, but the one under review strikes a new note. Winsten whom we regard as Shaw's greatest trumpeter, is the author of several works on the "jesting apostle" and has had access to unpublished correspondence. From his close friendship through many years he has been able to reveal facts especially about his early life which would not otherwise have been available to the reading public.

Shaw was born in Synge Street, Dublin, and his early family life was stormy, largely because of the dumbness and ineptitude of his father. Having had a long struggle for existence in his youth, his history is traced to the end when he dies, a wealthy man and one of the most famous in the world of literature. With all his greatness he was a crank ; his parsimonious attitude to charity and his decision to bequeath the bulk of his fortune for research on phonetic spelling are outstanding examples of his eccentricities. We can not attempt to review this study in detail ; it holds the reader from page one until the end, and so we have decided to concentrate on one aspect of his life which has probably been more discussed than any other. Was he a woman hater ? Was he an ardent lover ? Were his love affairs, especially was his married life platonic ? He was an incorrigible

philanderer and was sending love letters to seven women at a time and each one thought she was the chosen one. Among the women who came early into his life were Anne Besant and Kate Salt; the former when she heard him speak first took a deep revulsion to him, but later when he converted her to Socialism he became a saint in her eyes. Kate Salt was willing to pay for the publication of all his novels and to give him sufficient money to devote all his time to writing; she did all his clerical work for him for some years. When Florence Farr, who was a close friend of W. B. Yeats was producing modern plays in London and Shaw wanted her to put on "Arms and the Man" he wrote "This is to certify that you are my best and dearest love, the regenerator of my heart, the holiest joy of my soul, my treasure, my salvation, my reward, my secret glimpse of heaven, etc." These surely are not the expressions of a platonic lover. At one time it seemed to be in the balance whether he married his future wife Charlotte Townshend or Bertha Newcome; the latter described their relationship—"Frequent talking on the pros and cons of marriage, his dislike of the sexual relationship and so on would create an atmosphere of lovemaking without any need for caresses or endearments". She obviously did not intend to marry him. G. B. S. had a clear idea as to the life that Charlotte and he were going to lead—"To sleep in the same room, let alone the same bed, would lead to impossible situations. Which party, he argued, would decide whether or how much should the window be opened? How many blankets should be on the bed", etc. An audience at the National Liberal Club was surprised that the unromantic Shaw came down so heavily on the side of love and free biological selection; "I see a woman who takes my fancy and I fall in love with her". Later Mrs. Shaw objected strongly to his intimacy with Mrs. Pat Campbell. Shaw boasted to Frank Harris that the five novels he had written in his early years in London showed more knowledge of sex than most people acquired after bringing up a family of fifteen, that he had tried every experience and knew all that was to be learnt about the matter. When the Duke of Windsor abdicated he said with a chuckle "As she was an American, she had been married twice before and was therefore likely to make an excellent wife for a king who had never been married before". In our summing up of Shaw's relation to women we feel, no doubt, that he had real love affairs; all his writings point to this conclusion and we believe that some of his so-called platonic dicta were those of a poseur. What a pity it is that we have no knowledge of any progeny! In many of his writings he showed a dislike or perhaps we might say a contempt for the medical profession, but there is no doubt that "The Doctors' Dilemma" is a healthy pill for some of the many charlatans to swallow. What are his best plays? Will they survive? The answer to the first question is a matter of opinion, but we feel certain that many of his plays whether they be three act or one act, will be acted for many generations. How erudite he was, apart from his original works: he was a brilliant dramatic critic and a skilled musical critic. He was courageous to the point of foolhardiness and once when cycling with Bertrand Russell and Sidney Webb, he was nearly killed, and what a loss to the world he would have been! Wilde said of him that he had no enemies and none of his friends liked him. He remarked to Tagore that the most civilised poisons came from the East—Tea, Culture and Refinement, to which Tagore replied that the West had sent over deadlier poisons in the shape of Science, Industrialism and

Competition. Two of his plays and one of his books *The Adventures of a Black Girl in her search for God* were banned. Towards the end of his life he was thrilled when *Pygmalion* and *Major Barbara* were seen at the cinemas.

This delightful book must be read by anyone who wishes to keep apace with modern literature. A bibliography would enhance its value and we would suggest the insertion of dates as the titles of each chapter in future editions. The Index is comprehensive. There are many photographs portraying Shaw at various ages as well as many others of famous personalities.

The general production is what we expect from the firm of Hutchinson.

B. S.

THE CRAFT OF LETTERS IN ENGLAND. John Lehmann (Editor). Cresset Press. 21s.

The purpose of this symposium, published on the occasion of the P.E.N. Congress in London, is to provide a historical survey of the state of literature in England during the last twenty-five years.

The contributions, varied in approach, are concerned alike with problems, trends and achievements. Mr. J. I. M. Stewart writes in 'Biography' of what has been attempted since Lytton Strachey offered us the pleasures of irreverence and irony. He does not omit to point out that there have been some embarrassing excesses, and Mr. Alan Pryce-Jones, in his urbane analysis of the autobiographer's performance, is as careful to distinguish outstanding and flawed works. In their excellent essays, Mr. Francis Wyndham and Mr. Philip Toynbee examine the achievements and future of the novel, and the problems of the 'concerned' novelist. The survey by Mr. Roy Fuller and Mr. G. S. Fraser of contemporary poetry particularly merits the attention of the conservative reader, so persuasively do they explain the changes in taste, and the poet's own attitude.

Discussion of the theatre has become very much a platitudinous bedside consultation. The low state of the patient is decorously or perfunctorily taken for granted, and professional solicitude rushed away to more fashionable cases. Mr. T. C. Worsley has never resigned himself to this routine; and his challenge, 'The Author and the Theatre', is uncompromising but stimulating. Equally important is Miss C. V. Wedgwood's impartial yet finely perceptive account of historical writing as it reflects its epoch within the limits imposed by its essential task.

Mr. Paul Bloomfield's consideration of 'The Bloomsbury Tradition' and the contributions by Mr. L. D. Lerner and Mr. Maurice Cranston indicate the background and development of literary criticism, and the philosophical and other ideas which have most influenced the intellectual scene. The concluding essay, Mr. Erik de Maunay's 'The Progress of Translation' is an informed tribute to an art that has too often received scanty recognition.

Mr. John Lehmann, who has admirably edited the volume, suggests that English writers can, in looking back over the period, "congratulate themselves on an abundance and vitality of literary achievement second to no other country"; and *The Craft of Letters in England*, in itself most pleasurable reading, is a discriminating guide to the evidence.



THE STRANGENESS OF THE CHURCH. By Daniel T. Jenkins. The Christian Faith Series. Consulting Editor : Reinhold Niebuhr. Gollancz. 12s. 6d.

One of the best of the many books which have recently appeared to plead the cause, or discuss some aspects of, the Ecumenical Movement, is *The Strangeness of the Church*. Professor Jenkins writes from the point of view of a Reformed Protestant and a Congregationalist who gladly pays tribute to the work of other denominations, and suggests that the rise of the Movement "has made members of most churches see both the relativity of many of their distinctive beliefs and the extent to which the New Testament conception of the Church exposes the limitations of all church traditions."

The carapace of infallibility, the expediency of some ecclesiastics, the fundamentalist's odd enjoyment of the gulf he sets between dogma and the science from which he benefits, the acrimonious exchanges—the list is a long one of matters and attitudes that have moved more than rationalists to scorn. Professor Jenkins steadily considers the merited criticism; but his allegiance is to the Church whose historical root is "in the covenant which Abraham and his children entered into with Yahweh their God", to the message and life of Christ and His sacraments, to the worship whose purpose is "to renew our mind by refreshing our vision of the end in Christ and giving us light for our path through this world from its radiance"; and his study of the Church's power of internal renewal invites every Christian to share in a corporate life, a unity that allows flexibility and empiricism, but seeks always "to express more fully the life of the one Christ in His body." This is a scholarly and courteous book and deeply impressive.

MR. LYWARD'S ANSWER. By Michael Burn. London : Hamish Hamilton. 21s. net.

This is surely an exhilarating book and it is the story of something accomplished and something done : it is a tale of happy endings or rather happy beginnings, since at Finchden Manor the boys were given that chance to start again, which life so seldom affords in later years. It is written by a journalist, who although having no expert knowledge in education or psychiatry, went and lived in the school for maladjusted children which was started by Mr. Lyward, who apart from his exceptional gifts and distinguished accomplishments must approximate very closely to a saint. He has been teaching for forty years during twenty six of which he has been the owner and director of Finchden Manor; but he is also well known as a lecturer and Chairman of the Home and School Council. He is a psychiatrist of high standing even though he does not possess a medical degree. He was largely aided by his wife who "gave the strength that is not seen to a work in which she took no visible part". It is easy to imagine that selection of Staff was all important and Lyward certainly had able coadjutors.

The question of delinquents is very much in the public eye, now that the abolition of hanging is being discussed in Parliament for it will be remembered that a boy of nineteen suffered the extreme penalty within the last few years. The boys vary in age from fifteen to twenty with an average of seventeen and a half; they come from rich and poor families and no distinction is made. They are treated as human beings and are taught how to live. Many of the cases are due to bad homes and it is our strong and considered opinion that stupidity,

selfishness and ignorance on the part of parents are among the outstanding causes of crime in the youthful population ; but in an investigation it was found that broken homes, such as those caused by divorce, so commonly blamed are not the usual aetiological factors. A child should be trained in *his* way, not the way " he should go ". Since the experiment started in 1930, 270 boys entered ; a few had to be sent to mental homes, 30 remained less than six months, 15 came for brief treatment and returned to school immediately ; most of the remainder stayed for long periods. Examples of many of the problems are given ; possibly there are too many case records, even though they make exciting and interesting reading. It is wonderful to find how many had happy married lives and some of them became masters in the school. Much freedom was permitted, the boys were trusted and some of them earned a wage by hop picking and other means.

Michael Burn, the author, nicknamed Dr. Singe by the pupils has earned the gratitude of all interested in the welfare of children.

A photograph of Mr. Lyward should appear in subsequent editions.

B. S.

**AUTOMATION : FRIEND OR FOE ?** By R. H. Macmillan. Cambridge University Press. 8s. 6d.

The layman who would, if he were able, approach the subject of automation in an enlightened manner is yet rather discouraged. While his mind wanders uneasily between the emotional implications of a favoured term, " the second industrial revolution ", and the philosophers' austere treatment of cybernetics, he finds little help in listening to the expert's technical explanations ; and the nervous hopes of trade union leaders and confident assumptions of industrialists, alike, seem often as insecurely based as any opinion he might himself offer.

Mr. Macmillan, a Cambridge mathematical engineer, in his small illustrated book first traces the historical development of automatic devices, the evolution of the techniques of automatic production, and then discusses the economic and other advantages that may reasonably be expected, as well as the limitations of automatic factories. This does not claim to be a study for the specialist, but it is a most able and unpretentious general exposition.

**THE IGNOBLE ART.** By the Right Hon. Dr. Edith Summerskill, P.C., M.P. London : William Heineman Ltd. 10s. 6d. net.

" Boxing is the most self-centred and selfish sport there is ". " Prize fighting and Boxing have no value whatever in our civilisation physically, ethically, morally or spiritually ". These are quotations from this " onetrackminded " book. In our opinion, every boy should be taught how to box before he is sent to a boarding school for he must know how to protect himself ; if boxing is taught in the proper way by a competent teacher there is nothing brutal about it.

Amateur boxing is a magnificent and useful sport ; it teaches quick thinking and this is necessary in most professions and businesses, it trains the eye, it makes one nimble on the feet, and above all it teaches control of temper. Major accidents seldom occur, except apparently in the United States,

Professional boxing is quite another matter ; it is brutalising, the enormous rewards are not commensurate with the exploits : it has most of the disadvantages to which Dr. Summerskill refers, but she spoils her case by condemning all boxing ; if she had concentrated on boxing for payment she might have achieved something but when an advocate is so biased as she is, nothing will be gained. Rounds of 199, 99, and 75 are mentioned ; such marathon feats never happen to-day.

And so this short book with its disgusting pictures which are reminiscent of horror comics will fail in its purpose.

B. S.

OSTEOPATHY. By R. W. Puttick, D.O., M.R.O. London : Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d. net.

This is a concise and honest explanation of osteopathy written in a slightly and naturally biased manner. One of the difficulties in dealing with the 'pure' osteopathist compared with the qualified doctor who specialises in the subject is that the former is not under the jurisdiction of the General Medical Council, and so unless he commits an offence against the law of the land, actual professional misconduct can not be countered, though as the author points out he can be put off the Register of Osteopaths, but even after that he can still practise as a quack. In U.S.A., there are 10,000 osteopaths who are definitely legalised. In England, at present, there are (1) osteopaths who received their training in the U.S.A., (2) osteopaths who were trained by the B.O.A. at the London College of Osteopathy, (3) graduates who have had all their training at the British School of Osteopathy and (4) a large number who call themselves osteopaths and have had no special training. None of these, as we have stated are under the jurisdiction of the G.M.C. It is illegal for a qualified doctor to work with them, *e.g.*, to give an anaesthetic. The life of Andrew Still who was born in 1828 and was the creator of Osteopathy is romantic. In the definition of osteopathy it is stated that the major effort in treatment is manipulation but surgery and the specialities are included. In England osteopathy is incorrectly regarded as another term for manipulation ; "this is not accurate nor fair". Many examples of the benefits of osteopathy are quoted. The treatment of bronchitis is to relax the muscles of the neck and around the shoulder and then gently get movement in the upper ribs and in the special joints associated. The tragedy is that apparently most diseases will be tackled. Such an incurable disease as disseminated sclerosis is mentioned "not to show that osteopaths can cure this or other conditions but merely that an application of their principles is desirable in all cases". We consider that this is a sweeping and somewhat dangerous statement and we would advise patients with any possibly incurable disease to consult a qualified practitioner so that a diagnosis may be made. It is even suggested that sufferers from cancer might consult an osteopath. To sum up the situation we are sure there are many osteopaths, especially those qualified in the U.S.A. who do most useful work but until they are recognised by the G.M.C. the public is well advised to consult the specialist in osteopathy who is also a qualified doctor. In spite of our criticisms this is an interesting exposition of the author's art.

B. S.

BASIC BRITISH. By Victor Ross. Max Parrish. 10s. 6d.

*Basic British* will be vastly enjoyed by everyone who finds the British way of life diverting or exasperating. Mr. Victor Ross and his endearing relative, Uncle Bertie, determine with enthusiasm to master its intricacies of behaviour, idiom and opinions. Their boarding-house is a comparatively easy introduction for here are the expected food and solicitude for pet animals; but the pitfalls and bewildering situations increase at an unnerving rate—nothing, of course, conquers Uncle Bertie who develops a bulldog grip on affairs—with every new social or business contact. Mr. Ross's account of his internment in Scotland and Canada during the last war shows also that at least one Central European is in possession of the understatement. There is one dreadful moment immediately after his naturalization.

"Downstairs I saw the nonchalant figure of an Englishman, the picture of all I could never hope to be; in a light brown suit, discreetly checked, a handkerchief matching his tie, a dream of a yellow waistcoat, a salmon fly in his hatband, and to crown it all, a sandy Guards moustache on a freckled face.

" 'I say,' I began in what I thought was the appropriate manner, 'do you know where a man can get a drink round here? I waited in agony. Had my devilish accent given me away again?'

"The stranger shrugged his shoulders with typically British self-deprecation. 'I know nossing,' he said, 'I hef chust been British made.'"

Fortunately Mr. Ross recovers to write his exceedingly gay and witty book, marvellously illustrated by Sillince of *Punch*.

THE PEN IN EXILE. (Second Anthology). Edited by Paul Tabori. International P.E.N. Centre, 101 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.1. 12s. 6d. (Cloth), 9s. 6d. (Paper).

The success of their first anthology has inspired the International P.E.N. Club to sponsor this collection of eleven essays and twenty-five short stories, each by an individual author, and there are twenty-five works by fifteen poets. All of the contributors are exiles from totalitarian states, and the editor's aim seems to be the encouragement of those who have not yet attained international recognition; but students and lovers of literature, as well as general readers, need have no qualms about that purpose, because the standard of writing is as good as it is versatile. The book deserves success on its merits, apart altogether from the sentimental appeal.

SUMMER AT SAN MARTINO. By Eric and Barbara Whelpton. Hutchinson. 16s.

The Peninsula of San Martino has been deliberately added by Mr. Eric Whelpton to the west coast of Italy to protect the villages and little ports he loves from a plague of foreign trippers—the local variety he can do nothing about. It also allows him to communicate without restraint the full flavour of these places with their fishermen, peasants and inn-keepers, and their visitors: impoverished aristocrats briefly escaping the chill of their crumbling Roman or



Florentine palaces if not their elaborate pretence of unconcern with reality, the robust opportunists among the townspeople, the eccentrics.

His considerable knowledge of regional differences and relish for the small, colourful community with its comedies prompt the unerring, vivid sketches of people ; and his fastidious eye and pen note the subtler beauties of the landscape and architecture, the fascination of Elba and other islands. *Summer at San Martino* is a leisurely record of visual pleasures, though history and economic and political problems are not ignored when they explain improvidence or prejudice or changing tastes and values. The chapters on Tarquinio, its museum and the Etruscan tombs with their wall paintings are the tribute of a writer fascinated by an ancient civilisation and sensitive to its spirit and art, and to the lingering traces of its vitality.

"The men and women on the walls were timeless. They could have lived today, or in the fifteenth century, or thousands of years ago. When we came up, out of the tombs and into the light of the Umbrian noon, we found the same types collecting in the café. We identified the faces of the men and women—the deep red sun-darkened skins of the men from the fields, the lighter, paler, gold of the women. In the main, and presumably for purposes of economy, they were dressed rather drably in black, but those who did break away used the earth colours, the ochres and red earths, the deep purple and jewel colours of green and blue and the colour of fire."

The illustrations by Mrs. Whelpton delightfully celebrate their discoveries.

THE MYSTERY OF LOURDES. By Ruth Cranston. Evans. 18s.

THE SEARCH FOR BRIDEY MURPHY. By Morey Bernstein. Hutchinson. 15s.

Popular expositions of parapsychology and spiritual healing have in recent years encouraged a more fluid conception of individual man ; and there is a wide interest in non-technical books that offer further evidence.

Mrs. Ruth Cranston, an American who has served on the World Conference of Religions at Geneva, has studied the subject of spiritual healing and she describes, as a Protestant, the deep impression made on her by Lourdes. Of Bernadette and her vision, the many substantiated cures, the present organisation, the devotional atmosphere, the pilgrimages, the attitude of believers and the cautious, she writes with quiet but alert sympathy. Her book is carefully compiled, detailed and most reverent ; but one must regret the over-simplification of her conclusion that Lourdes "may be the key to the healing of a sick world".

Mr. Bernstein, also an American, is fascinated rather by the paranormal powers of the mind as he has directly experienced them. He discovered by chance that he was a hypnotist and, when he had cured friends of various minor ailments, he began seriously to study hypnotherapy, and undertook age-regression experiments. At first his subject, a Middle West housewife, was directed under hypnosis to recall her childhood ; but his later interest in re-incarnation theories, encouraged him to investigate the possibility of memories before birth.

Here he presents—a tape-recorder was used—his conversations with his

subject during trance. A woman who called herself Bridey Murphy emerged and described her life in nineteenth-century Ireland. Impartial investigators have proved the accuracy of at least some of the details given. Trivial though they may be in themselves, a large American public has been excited and overwhelmed. Mr. Bernstein's integrity is obvious, and his book is an able introduction to hypnosis—which makes all the more unhappy the fact that the intellectual level of the sessions distressingly resembles that of the ordinary *séance*.

WINSTON CHURCHILL ON JEWISH PROBLEMS. By Oskar K. Rabinowicz. Published for the World Jewish Congress, British Section, by Lincolns-Prager. 7s. 6d.

"It is surprising that Churchill has not yet been allocated his appropriate place in Jewish history in general, and in Anglo-Jewish history in particular. Not even his repeated statements that throughout his life he has been a friend of the Jews and an ardent Zionist have tempted a single historian to study his stand in matters decisively affecting Jewry. It is this omission that has prompted me to embark upon my task. For it seemed to me as if a page, of which he himself often spoke with pride, had been torn out of the chronicle of Churchill's life."

Dr. Rabinowicz, the distinguished writer on Jewish and Zionist subjects, has devoted much research since 1940 to the collection of material which is an integral part of any full study of Sir Winston Churchill's statesmanship, and valuable to any general consideration of Britain's attitude on Jewish questions. The present volume confines itself to the Diaspora; a subsequent one will deal with the Palestine and Zionist movement.

Dr. Rabinowicz's own contribution, apart from the masterly presentation of the material—writings and speeches—is a restrained commentary and indication of the background, and an eloquent tribute to Sir Winston. Indispensable to every student of Anglo-Jewish history, this book deserves also the close attention of all those who concern themselves with contemporary problems.

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURE REPORT FOR 1955.

EQUITIES. By Lila Ray. os. od.

YANTRAS OR MECHANICAL CONTRIVANCES IN ANCIENT INDIA. By V. Raghavan. Rs. 2s.

KALHANA, POET-HISTORIAN OF KASHMIR. By Somnath Dhar. is. 8d.

THE TRANSLATION OF MASTERPIECES OF LITERATURE: AN ANTHOLOGY OF SIKH SACRED WRITINGS. By Kushwant Singh. Unesco. The Indian Institute of Culture, Bangalore.

THE WITNESS OF A WEAVER-SINGER, 6d. GAUTAMA BUDDHA. JUNNUNA MISRI: A PILGRIM OF ETERNITY, 6d. PICTURES FROM ST. FRANCIS, 9d. THE SAINT OF DAKSHINESWAR, 9d. SONS OF LIGHT, 9d. By T. L. Vaswani. 'East and West Series', Gita Publishing House, Poona-I.

From the *Report for 1955* of the Indian Institute of Culture, it is obvious that its members work ardently for the sort of international culture that can best develop understanding between East and West, and enable each to offer freely its particular contribution towards the growth of a more tolerant world,

The arts, science and education, social and political ideas in their widest aspects, are the subjects on which distinguished speakers from many lands are invited to address an informed audience ; and the range of books discussed is impressive.

Among the Institute's most recent publications are *Equities*, a valuable collection of essays that considers current problems in the light of Mahatma Gandhi's teachings ; the new and extended reprint of a paper by Dr. Raghavan on the material development of ancient India ; and Shri Somnath Dhar's lecture on the remarkable twelfth-century writer, Kalhana. The reprint from the *Unesco Chronicle* is an account of the translations now being undertaken by Sikh scholars of some of their sacred writings.

The 'East and West Series' booklets, issued by the monthly journal *Mira*, which is devoted to the work of Sri T. L. Vaswani, are little studies from the mystical point of view of various saints and sages. They have their own charm, but it is one that, for the occidental taste, is too rhapsodical.

**THE PENGUIN STORY.** By Sir William Emrys Williams. Penguin Books. West Drayton, Middlesex.

To mark the twenty-first birthday of Penguin Books, Sir William E. Williams, in a delightfully produced and illustrated small volume, has written their history from the cautious first batch of "safe" titles and the later unabridged reprints of books of quality in fiction, travel, biography and *belles lettres*, through the success of the Pelicans ("the Third Programme equivalent of the Home Service Penguin"), the Penguin Specials, the King Penguins, and on to the other series, all of which have been gratefully received by a public with a modest purse, wide interests, and taste in book production.

Sir William describes this "adventurous major experiment in publishing", and plans for the future, with proper enthusiasm for, inviting as the abundance of these books is in the bookshops, and familiar as they are on one's shelves, in the street, on every journey, the Complete Catalogue at the end of *The Penguin Story* is astonishing in its length, and in the varied, substantial and discriminating pattern it reveals.

**NAUTILUS VERSES.** Dundalgan Press, Dundalk. 3s. 6d.

For many years *The Nautilus* has circulated periodically in manuscript among its contributors, who criticise one another's work and also engage the services of an independent critic. Some of these manuscript numbers have included poems, essays and short stories of unusual quality and the contributors' *noms-de-plume* occasionally conceal the name of a writer known to a wider audience. *Nautilus Verses* includes a selection from past numbers and makes a pleasant booklet. Considerations other than intrinsic merit may have gone into the selection, and perhaps more acid would have revealed more pearl. Yet some of the lighter and less significant poems are quite charming and among serious poems, those by Suotto, Tola and Honor O'Neill make one look for more by the same poets. It is to be hoped that this first publication by the Nautilus group will not be their last,

THE FENTONS. By Richard Goyne. Stanley Paul. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Richard Goyne's latest novel tells of rich old Mrs. Fenton, who, aware that she has an incurable disease, plans to save her family from the disruption threatened by the excessive drinking and despair at his seemingly-lost genius of her son Clive, and by the wilfulness of his children. With the help of Clive's devoted wife and son Mark, a country vicar, Mrs. Fenton brings them all to the rambling vicarage which she beautifully refurnishes, and then restores everyone's happiness, settles love-affairs, and even provides the plot for a novel whereby Clive can again dazzle himself, the family and the outside world—all this she achieves before dying in the arms of her faithful servants in the church porch during a service.

Mr. Goyne writes with deep conviction, and doubtless there will be many readers able to accept the comfort of his message. This promises to be "the first of a saga of novels about a family which 'has something of most of us in it'"; but the sentimentality in which the Fentons flourish is almost incredible, not, or so one hopes, typical.

GIANT'S ARROW. By Anthony Rye. Gollancz. 12s. 6d.

ONE FOR THE ROAD. By W. J. White. Jonathan Cape. 13s. 6d.

Mr. Anthony Rye quotes, to explain the title of his novel: "Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant: even so are the young children"—the arrow being aimed at parents who conform rather strictly to psychological types. There is Kelly's neurotic wife who disguises her guilt for an attempted abortion by hating him and their crippled, imbecile child; there is the extraverted, domineering Devere's wife whose hurt, when his ambition as a struggling clerk forces an abortion on her, finds alleviation in a secret fantasy-world. Kelly's obsession with his wife and child persuades him to rid himself of his responsibilities in the outside world and lose himself in morbid compassion; Devere's victory over a harsh world turns to ashes till he clutches at the opportunity of new conquests for the unborn child of his mistress. For background there are materialistic values and Roman Catholicism in its rigid and tolerant aspects. Many readers will find this an impressive book; but, rather curiously where so much care has been given to psychological analysis, Mr. Rye seems satisfied with the sentimental solution which gratifies Kelly's essential weakness.

In *One for the Road*, the narrator, Gerald Wilson, partner in a prosperous business in war-time Dublin, believes that an attempt has been made to murder him at a party given by himself and his wife. A second incident confirms his suspicions and, at bay but with what he considers nice craft, he sets himself to discover his enemy. Indifferent to the crumbling away of marital comfort and financial gain, he watches in turn his wife, the husband of a former mistress, his partner, the man with whom he discovers his wife is in love. One of his associates, a sort of suburban Iago, so adeptly confuses him that, only after his sanity has been threatened, is he assured that he at last knows the truth and can plan his revenge.



Both these clever books are neat examples of the work done by the growing number of novelists here and in America who believe that their proper study is the commonplace man with his rather numb pleasures and immature response to vaguely-apprehended problems.

MUTINY AT THE CURRAGH. By A. P. Ryan. Macmillan. 18s.

The crisis at the Curragh in 1914 has been discussed so often on inaccurate and insufficient information that it needed an impartial narrator to give us the truth about the affair, what led up to it and how it ended. Here is the whole story, from the introduction of the moribund Home Rule Bill to the gun-running exploits of two rebellious forces—a complete chapter of British and Irish high politics, which is much more than the title of the book implies. Although the author does not mention the fact, the accusation of “mutiny” and “disobeyance of orders” was made first, in this connection, by a section of the popular Press; and, as this book records, it was refuted when the Generals’ spokesman assured the Adjutant General that had the Forces been ordered to go to Belfast they would have obeyed without demur. Undoubtedly, they would have gone unwillingly, and it is quite understandable that they would not give an assenting answer to a hypothetical question. That, in brief, was the crux in a political blunder which aroused a storm of recrimination, charge and counter-charge, and scenes of violence in the House of Commons. Aloof from the party wranglings stood the Generals, who, it seems, were the only people involved who kept their heads clear and cool.

The author has made full and good use of the relevant bibliography and contemporaneous Press work, and he has had the benefit of some personal papers and verbal testimony.

THE DEVIL BOAT. By David Stuart Leslie. Hurst & Blackett. 13s. 6d.

This ‘first’ novel introduces us to an unfamiliar setting: the author has found the Azores, and found in that archipelago good grounds for a thrilling story of adventure. It may seem that the theme is slow in development, that minor incidents recur too frequently in the earlier chapters: probably the Terceirans talk boringly about illicit ‘love’ (prostitution of a good biblical word!) and go too often to “the wall”; but soon, when they begin to show their hardihood, the reader becomes engrossed in realistic descriptions of hazards and storms, of whale-hunting and transportation to a hostile land. At the end is a skilful ‘twist’ which explains the earlier interplay of two conflicting characters. The unusual plan of construction is the one most suitable to the wide scope and varied material in this admirable novel in which the highlights do not develop, they are revealed.

The author has proved his ability to impart to the reader his ‘eye’ for the sea-girth scene and his insight to the minds of the islanders. We shall welcome another book by Mr. Leslie.

ENCHANTING BELLAMY. By Cyril Hughes Hartmann. Heinemann. 25s.

When an author expresses his "slight resentment" at the bestowal of laudatory epithets, like "accurate" and "scholarly", upon his work, what else can the challenged reviewer do than share his disdain for the hackneyed adjectives?—and keep on using them: when he explains why this book may be inaccurate and unscholarly, what else can his public do than accept his confession that he has been writing for his own diversion? Then there is his expression of hope that his readers, too, may be diverted. Mr. Hartmann may be assured that they will be diverted, gratefully, and they will agree with him that his Introduction seems to be "a trifle bizarre". The inaccuracies, if there are any, must be in the original sources which have been so finely 'tooth-combed' by a long succession of other experts, that very few remain unnoticed.

This is a robust thespian story, with the enchanting Mrs. Bellamy as the leading lady, supported by her friends and rivals and surrounded by *aristos*, 'bucks' and 'gallants'. The settings are in London and Dublin in the heyday of the Georgian period. Rousing and amusing incidents at Covent Garden and Drury Lane and Smock Alley, now made colourful by the passage of time, make absorbing entertainment; and encomiums thrust upon the unreceptive author would be superfluous.

THE GREEN HILLS, AND OTHER STORIES. By Walter Macken. Macmillan. 12s. 6d.

In these characteristic short stories the author makes full and discerning use of his familiarity with the City of the Tribes and the western seaboard, and he shows us a community that is changing gradually from its native qualities to foreign sophistication. Yet underlying the surface of outside influences, chiefly mechanism, the cinema, the tourists and the fashion journal, is the inherent charm and sensibility of a homely people whose environments and ways of life are represented here, mostly in the lighter vein. Even in the more dramatic episodes there are those subtle turns of phrase and touches of wit and humour which abound in Mr. Macken's earlier works. This is a collection to be kept and re-read.

MAMMOTH; BELIEVE IT OR NOT. Stanley Paul & Co. 12s. 6d.

In this volume (to quote the blurb, which—believe it or not—is a true description) "assembled together are more than seven hundred extraordinary incidents and phenomena, unbelievable but vouched for", and "Graphically illustrated with more than two hundred drawings, all these wonders have been checked and rechecked in the famous Ripley manner". A volume which will "certainly amuse all who agree with Goethe that 'Wisdom begins with wonder'".

MISS MARLOW FROM COURT. By David Emerson. Hurst and Blackett. 12s. 6d.

Mr. Emerson has the agreeable art in his historical novels of wearing knowledge lightly. His period pieces are so quietly authentic in their details and attitudes that they seem the casual observation of a contemporary. The present book set in the late eighteenth century, relates the fortunes of Susan

Marlow whose disastrous marriage while an inexperienced orphan has been adroitly hidden—the husband being bribed to go to India—by her two worldly uncles. A place has even been secured for her at Court as a sub-governess ; but after five years of that chastening, and stiffening, experience, she manages to extricate herself and comes to live in London with two friends, a general's daughters. The world of fashion and literature and the gaieties of the demi-monde are the background to this story of a self-willed young woman who encounters once more her violent, fascinating husband.

THE PATTERN OF ENGLISH. By G. H. Vallins. The Language Library. Edited by Eric Partridge. Andre Deutsch. 15s.

" This book is neither a Grammar nor a Manual of modern usage. It is rather an attempt to show, by illustration and example, the changing pattern of English from the time of King Alfred to the present day. In another way, it is a study in practice and precept ; for after the first chapter, which deals in the main with the inflected language, it concerns itself with the old and still continuing conflict between custom and law, usage and grammar, what is and what ought to be."

Inflections and their resolution into the prepositional phrase and attributive noun, giving to Modern English " an idiomatic conciseness of expression . . . and a peculiar, if embarrassing, flexibility of usage " ; the basic word order, conventional but not rigid ; the verbal phrase ; the sentence pattern, its history after the medieval period a matter less of grammar than of style ; syntax, punctuation praxis : these aspects of linguistic analysis Mr. Vallins discusses clearly and in detail, and his illustrations from Old English sources down to contemporary writers, Virginia Woolf and Mr. T. S. Eliot among them, are admirably chosen. Grammarians, ancient and modern, are also quoted for the importance of their criticism, or for some such quaint comment as Lindley Murray's : " We hardly consider little children as persons, because that term gives us the idea of reason or reflection : therefore the application of the personal relative *who* seems to be harsh ".

Mr. Vallins has written a valuable and most attractive book ; and the reader recalling school room tribulations, and still hesitant, will find much comfort in his observation : " It is always well to remember that the greatest grammarian of all is Time, because he goes, of necessity, hand in hand with change."

HORSE PSYCHOLOGY. By Moyra Williams. London : Methuen. 16/- net.

" The more I see of people the more I love my dog " and my horse. We can not ascertain if Moyra Williams is married with a family or whether she is a veterinary surgeon. We *do* know that she learnt psychology at Oxford, that she was a research student with the famous brain surgeon Sir Hugh Cairns and that her understanding and love of horses emanate from every page of this scholarly book. How we wish that those would read it, who are responsible for the journeys of torture to which the horses sent for slaughter to the continent are subjected. They would learn that these animals have a sense of smell, touch, direction, and



memory. Explanatory text combined with drawings and diagrams demonstrate that these sensations are present. The life history, including the habits of many of the horses which have passed through the hands of the author are described; by the time they have finished their training they must love her very dearly. Intelligence tests are much the same as those used by paediatricians, but we do not know where she got the definition of intelligence as the ability of an individual to get what he wants. It is said that an elephant never forgets; neither does a horse; its temperament often goes with its build; the slightly built thoroughbred will probably be hypersensitive while the large and prosperous looking Clydesdale will be easy going; these traits appertain to the human species.

We thought we had seen the last word in the understanding of animals when we read "King Solomon's Ring," by Lorenz; this shows at least an equal appreciation and the horses of the world and those of us who love them are grateful.

B. S.

#### PERIODICALS.

BOOKS ABROAD. An International Literary Quarterly. Spring 1956. University of Oklahoma Press. One Dollar and Twenty-five Cents.

The Spring issue of *Books Abroad* is largely devoted to a comprehensive survey of foreign books and periodicals; but, in addition there are some distinguished essays: a study of Ukrainian literature during the last quarter of a century by George Luckyj, a report on contemporary Yugoslav letters by Milo Dor, B. Munteano's consideration of orientations in Rumanian literature, and Anton Logoreci's "The Dialogue of Modern Albanian Writing".

ÉTUDES ANGLAISES. Avril-Juin, 1956. Didier, Paris. 400 fr.

This number opens with an article by Cyrille Arnavon on "Les Nouveaux Conservateurs Américains". He suggests that: "Depuis dix ans une véritable école est apparue aux Etats-Unis qui renouvelle et adapte aux exigences de l'heure les thèmes familiers du conservatisme socio-politique", and has written ably and fully on its thought and practice. Etiemble, who has made a close study of T. E. Lawrence, critically examines Richard Aldington's recent book; and there are, as well as the usual features, essays on Spenser, Kipling and "La Littérature anglaise du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle".

TRACE. Edited by James Boyer May. February, 1956. 2s.

The February number of this directory and survey of the small magazines also includes a lengthy extract from a forthcoming book by George Abbe, entitled *You and Modern Poetry*.





